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Sneh: New health system part of larger reforms

JUDY SIEGEL and Itim

THE national health insurance system is part of an even larger reform that will include a national pension system, Health Minister Ephraim Sneh said yesterday. The minister also said that 75 percent of all breadwinners - or 1.5 million people - will pay less in health taxes this month than they did in health fund membership fees.

Sneh told reporters in Tel Aviv that changes will certainly have to be made as the ministry examines the law's impact on medical care, but added that during the past week a number of important corrections already were made.

Public attitudes towards new law
Page 3



New Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Shahak salutes an honor guard, while his predecessor, Ehud Barak, marches at his side.

Shahak takes command of IDF

ALON PINKAS

DEFENSE Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Lt.-Gen. (res.) Ehud Barak yesterday flanked new Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Shahak and pinned on the insignia of his new rank.

"We have added a new fig leaf, weighing just a few grams, on Amnon's shoulder, but its real weight is tons of steel, of tanks, planes, ships, and shells and, above all, the weight of the responsibility for Israel's security, for the lives of every one of us here," Rabin said at the change-of-command ceremony in at IDF headquarters in Tel Aviv. Shahak was clearly excited and moved.

while Barak seemed cheerfully amused. As the two marched side by side and reviewed the honor guard holding the banners of the various IDF branches and corps, Barak could not help smiling and chatting with the soldiers. He then looked up at the GHQ building and waved farewell to the officers and soldiers standing in the windows.

"I have two words to tell you, Ehud - good-bye and thank you," Rabin told Barak, but went on to praise Barak in much more than two words.

In his farewell address, distributed to all IDF soldiers and officers, Barak said: "I carry with me many memories and much pride... there is no one like you. I am proud to be one of you and to have commanded you... I leave what has been a home to me for the last 35 years... It is time to get out of the uniform, a time to say good-bye... Soldiers, commanders, I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Following the ceremony, Shahak convened the General Staff forum and presented a summary of his outlook for the IDF. Shahak's Order of the Day, Page 2

PA refuses to hand over killers of Uri Megidish

EVELYN GORDON

THE Palestinian Authority has decided not to extradite the killers of Uri Megidish of Moshav Gan Or in Gaza, in what the independent monitoring group Peace Watch says is a clear violation of the Cairo Agreement.

The refusal to extradite Rajah and Amru Abu Sita is the PA's first response to an Israeli request for the extradition of terrorists, as opposed to ordinary criminals. Requests for extradition of criminals have so far all been complied with.

The Prime Minister's Office said last night it was not aware of the Palestinian announcement and therefore had no comment.

Ziad Atrash, who heads the Palestinian side of the joint security committee, told his Israeli counterpart, Brig.-Gen. Yom Tov Samia, in a December 24 letter that because the murder took place in March 1993, it is not covered by the agreement, which

entered into force only on May 4, 1994.

"The accurate understanding and interpretation of the Agreement [is] that it organizes the future relations among its parties," wrote Atrash. "It does not apply to the past unless it states about that frankly. But the text lacks that implicitly or explicitly."

Furthermore, he said, the agreement states that as a confidence-building measure, some prisoners already held by Israel will be released and the fate of others will be negotiated upon.

"This means that dealing with acts committed prior to the signing of the Agreement should be treated either by real release of some, or by negotiating about the others," he wrote. "The treatment of these issues is the real form of the peace process."

"The utmost good intent..."

[shows that those] who committed the former acts [i.e. acts prior to the signing of the agreement] are to be negotiated upon, and not a subject of requests of transferring," Atrash concluded.

"Therefore, there is no ground in the Agreement [that] supports your request of transferring the above-mentioned two suspects."

However, Peace Watch rejected the PA's argument, terming the decision a clear violation.

"Peace Watch generally avoids taking an unequivocal position when there are a number of legitimate interpretations of the agreement," the organization said in a press statement.

"However, in this case... the interpretation given to the agreement by the Palestinians is not supported at all by the text of the agreement. It would appear that this interpretation is being

brought forward with the intent of covering up a failure to live up to an obligation established by the accord."

The organization's legal adviser, Amiram Bogat, explained that while the agreement imposes a number of limitations on extradition requests - for instance, they cannot be made for crimes bearing less than a seven-year prison sentence - nowhere is there any stipulation that extraditions can only be requested for crimes committed after the agreement was signed. The PA's interpretation, he said, adds something that simply is not there.

Furthermore, he said, the PA's interpretation essentially grants an amnesty for all crimes committed before the signing of the agreement - and it is very unlikely that the drafters would have failed to state such a thing explicitly. (Continued on Page 2)

Poll: Rabin leads Netanyahu, but approval rating down

Jerusalem Post Staff

IF direct elections for prime minister were held today, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin would top Likud chairman Benjamin Netanyahu 42 percent to 40%, the same time, approval of Rabin's overall performance has dropped by 9% since September.

These are among the results of a poll conducted late last month by Teleset for Channel 2. In it, 1,501 people from all sectors of the population were questioned. The margin of error was 2.5%.

In a similar poll conducted early last month by Dahaf, Netanyahu topped Rabin 44% to 42%. That poll had a 3% margin of error.

Rabin's general popularity dropped from 55.9% in September to 46.4% last month. More specifically, 15.5% said his performance was very good, 29% good enough, 25.3% not so good, 26.2% poor, and 4% had no opinion.

For these questions, 1,000 people were polled, and the margin of error was 3%.

In specific areas, 48.8% were satisfied with his conduct of foreign and security affairs, down from 58.8% in September. In his conduct of the peace process, 53.3% were satisfied, down from 57.5% in September.

With regard to social affairs, his rating dropped to 38.4% from 47.2%, and in economic matters, to 34% from 40.3%.

If the Knesset elections were held today, Labor would win 42 seats (it now has 44), and the Likud 41 (now 32).

Meretz would win 10 seats (12), the Arab parties 5 (5), Tsomet 7 (8, including Y'ud), Moleket 2 (3), the National Religious Party 5 (6), United Torah Judaism 4 (4), and Shas 4 (6).

This would mean that the coalition and the Arab Parties would lose their blocking majority, and that the religious parties, despite losing three seats, would hold an even stronger balance of power, as Labor and Meretz would hold 52 seats, and the Likud, Tsomet, and Moleket, 50.

In an unprecedented shake-up at the trouble-ridden Habimah National Theater, the board of directors yesterday requested the resignations of general-manager Dr. David Alexander and artistic director Gary Bilu.

Protesting this decision, board member Eliazur Goren and board chairman Sar-Shalom Shiran immediately resigned. Efraim Reiner was then elected acting chairman in his place.

The board's decision followed two days of marathon meetings, originally convened to discuss Alexander's demand that Bilu be dismissed.

In the theater, actors getting ready for the evening's performances expressed shock and consternation that Bilu would be leaving.

When asked for his response to the board's decision, Alexander declined to comment.

"The real reason is that the theater cannot be run by two people, especially when one knows everything about the theater and the other one knows nothing," Bilu said, adding, "We came together. We go together."

Bilu and Alexander are expected to submit their resignations in a few days.

Background, Page 5

Heads roll at Habimah as bosses forced to resign

HELEN KAYE

Russian forces bombard Grozny

GROZNY (AP) - Russian forces pummeled rebel positions in the Chechen capital with thundering barrages of tank and rocket fire yesterday. A fierce battle raged around the presidential palace.

The Russian government claimed Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev had fled the palace and taken refuge in a bunker on the outskirts of Grozny with his bodyguards.

Russia's Independent TV network reported from the bunker and said Dudayev was not there.

See story Page 4

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NEW YORK TIMES

The New York Times Weekly Review does not appear in today's paper due to technical difficulties. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Agranat report made public – still leaves questions

THEN-defense minister Moshe Dayan negated the possibility of a preemptive strike against Egypt and Syria, according to the Agranat Commission report on the Yom Kippur War, which was released to the public yesterday, almost 20 years after it was completed.

The report also found that chief of general staff David (Dado) Elazar did not initiate a total reserve call-up until it was authorized by prime minister Golda Meir, and that the IDF

Intelligence Branch's assessments were inherently flawed.

The central theme of the report is that the political echelon acted appropriately, but the IDF failed to prepare for war, failed to anticipate war, failed to determine the enemy's capabilities, and failed to correctly estimate the war's course. The only senior officer whose conduct was unblemished was deputy chief of staff Yisrael Tal.

Despite the media hype over the report's declassification, or-

dered in June by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the dozens of pages on the Intelligence Branch were not released, and many key questions remain unanswered.

Who knew about King Hussein's visit to Israel in late September 1973, and why was his warning of an Egyptian-Syrian attack not taken seriously? How was Israel's security "concept" formulated? It maintained that Syria and Egypt were unlikely to attack without air superiority, and that if they did, there would

ALON PINKAS

be ample intelligence warning and time to call up the reserves, because the IAF's superiority would stall any ground attack.

Why was there no contingency plan for a failure of this concept? The Intelligence Branch estimated that the Egyptian army would be able to cross the Suez Canal in three or four places. In fact, it crossed in more than 20, totally demolishing the Israeli outposts on the canal. Israel's air

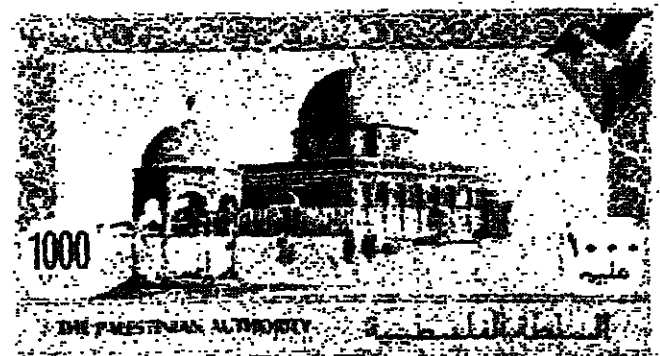
superiority was offset by a massive array of anti-aircraft missile batteries. Did air force intelligence foresee this? The report does not answer.

The misconceptions and misperceptions of Egyptian and Syrian intentions and capabilities were the heart of failure that the Agranat Commission was meant to investigate. But it decided, for reasons never made clear, to concentrate on the day preceding and the first two days of the war, October 6-8, 1973.

The report, submitted originally on January 28, 1975, states what the public already knew from the interim reports released in April and July 1974, namely the much-criticized conclusion that almost totally exonerated the political echelon from responsibility, while the IDF's Intelligence Branch, and many of its senior staff officers and field commanders, emerged as the culprits.

The Agranat Commission was established against a background

of public outcry and protest movements. With the 1974 elections – postponed from 1973 – in sight, Meir decided to set up the commission. At the insistence of Dayan, alert to the political explosiveness of downplaying the issue, a theoretically powerful commission was set up, consisting of two Supreme Court justices, Shimon Agranat and Moshe Landau; two former chiefs of staff, Yigael Yadin and Haim Laskov; and state comptroller Dr. Yitzhak Nechami.



The Palestinian Authority yesterday issued its first series of postage stamps, including this one, showing the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount. The stamps, however, have not yet been approved by the International Postal Union. (Reuters)

Dispute over Efrat reaches Cairo talks

LAMIA LAHOUD

THE expansion of Efrat will be one of the main issues discussed at the Higher Liaison Committee meeting in Cairo tomorrow, according to several Palestinian Authority ministers.

Civil Affairs Minister Jamil Tarifi said he hoped the Israeli government would find a way to stop the construction. But, he added, the Palestinians yield to any ruling by Israeli courts, since settlement activities are a violation of the Declaration of Principles and should be treated as a political matter.

"We agreed to postpone several issues till the final-status talks, like Jerusalem, refugees, external security, and settlements. We also agreed not to do anything to create facts on the ground which would influence the final status talks."

According to Tarifi, the issue is not just Efrat.

If Israel allows its expansion, he said, other settlements will expand and more Palestinian land will be confiscated. In such an atmosphere, it would be difficult for the PA to convince the Palestinian population of the advantages of the

peace process, and the influence of extremists will grow, Tarifi said.

PA Economics Minister Ahmed Oreia said the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians will continue despite the land clearing near El Khader.

But, he said, "according to the DOP, Gaza and the West Bank are one territorial entity. To extend settlements while discussing the implementation of Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank does not make any sense, and violates the DOP," he said.

He also believes that the issue should be discussed between PA head Yasser Arafat and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Saeb Erekat, who holds the election portfolio, who was present during most of the protests at the land-clearing site, said the army protected settlers who threatened Palestinian protesters with their guns.

Tarifi said he believes the Israeli government understands the sensitivity of the situation and will find a way to stop building in Efrat and other settlements.

Undercover soldier arrested for plotting to kill Arabs

Military Police yesterday arrested a soldier of the undercover Duvdevan unit for plotting to kill Palestinian workers, Israel Radio reported.

The soldier, identified as Sgt. G., will be tried tomorrow by a Ground Corps Command military court. He is charged with

planning to kill Arab workers, conspiracy, and illegal use of firearms. He had tried to convince two officers to prepare a bomb which he intended to plant at a Gaha Junction bus stop where Palestinian workers await transportation.

One of the officers alerted the Military Police.

Efrat 'moderates' call for a stand on Jewish rights

HERB KEINON

A CLARION call to take a firm stand on Jewish rights in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria was sounded yesterday in Efrat – long considered the most placid of settlements – by two men considered the most moderate of settlement leaders: Efrat local council head Yonon Ahiman, and the settlement's rabbi, Shalom Riskin.

"Don't delude yourselves into thinking that one more struggle and the Jews won't be here," Ahiman said, in a call to the residents of El Khader, who are opposing the expansion of Efrat. "In the past we have solved problems through understanding – my door has been open to you, and it is still open. But this is a decisive battle; we will stand firm."

Speaking at an "emergency meeting" in Efrat of the Union of Rabbis for the People and Land of Israel, Ahiman said, "We are

standing at a crossroads for all the settlements in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. I call on the government not to surrender to terror and violence. If they do, who knows what will be with Jerusalem."

Riskin said the government is facing a fateful decision. "Efrat is a testing ground [to see] whether we will give in to terror and threats, or stand firm on our rights. It is a testing ground [to see] if there is a future to all the settlements in our Holy Land. It is a testing ground for greater Jerusalem, and even for neighborhoods within Jerusalem that are beyond the Green Line."

National Religious Party MK Hanan Porat said, "We will in no way accept a government decision" to stop building on Givat Tamar. "A government that takes such a decision is digging its

own grave."

Porat, a driving force behind the group that has bought land on the hill, saved his harshest words for Peace Now and Gush Shalom activists, who he said incited El Khader residents and encouraged them to fight the settlement's expansion.

"This is not only a blow to us, it is also a blow to our matriarch Rachel," buried in nearby Bethlehem, Porat said.

Among the rabbis at the meeting was Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein, dean of Yeshivat Har Eitzion in nearby Alon Shvut, who has come out squarely in favor of the peace process. In an interview after the meeting, Lichtenstein said he agrees that Jews have rights to all the land of Israel, but said it is necessary to be

"flexible and not dogmatic" in determining when to employ those rights.

Lichtenstein said he has some concern that the government, in its "exuberance" to achieve peace, may have overlooked certain security matters. He said that now that Efrat has been made an issue, "the principle of our rights has to be affirmed."

At the same time, however, he dissociated himself from those who think that a decision to stop building Givat Tamar should be fought "with all our might and on all fronts."

Not all in the audience were pleased to hear the words of some of the rabbis. When Riskin went to speak, one elderly man stood up and shouted, "Did you not say once that it is all right to give up land for peace?"

Riskin denied the comment, and was called a phony by the heckler, who kicked a man who tried to usher him out of the hall, after first raising his cane at the man in a threatening fashion.

Another Gush Etzion rabbi, Menahem Froman, who advocates talking with Hamas, was also heckled as he tried to grant a radio interview while sitting in the audience.

The panel included leading rabbis from the national-religious camp, including former chief rabbi Avraham Shapira, Kiryat Arba's Eliezer Waldman, Bet El's Zalman Melamed and Haim Druckman from Mercaz Shapira.

Ya'acov Yosef, son of Shas mentor Ovadia Yosef, was also at the gathering, and told reporters that "it is forbidden to stop work on the hill."

First Fatah anniversary in Gaza becomes huge rally for Arafat

JON IMMANUEL

THE first Fatah anniversary in Gaza celebrated in the presence of its founder, Yasser Arafat, was marked yesterday with widespread celebrations, accusations of Israeli violations of the Oslo Accords, and a spate of shooting incidents.

The IDF reported that gunmen opened fire before dawn at an Israeli patrol near Beit Hanoun, inside the northern entrance to the Gaza Strip. Soldiers returned fire but the gunmen escaped.

Two gunmen fired shots at an Israeli tractor driver near Ganei Tal in Gush Katif, just west of

Khan Yunis.

In a third incident, Palestinian Police stopped an Israeli foot patrol near the Morag Junction and pointed their weapons at the soldiers, the IDF said.

Arafat established Fatah 30 years ago and immediately launched attacks on targets in Israel to broaden his support. He took control of the PLO in 1968.

Celebrations were held yesterday in several towns and villages in Gaza, Bethlehem, and the Ramallah area, spurred by the Efrat building controversy near El Khader and claims of land confiscations in the Ramallah area.

In the village of Dir Kadis, demonstrators protested against the expropriation of 100 dunams by the neighboring Israeli settlement of Kiryat Sefer. Arafat adviser Dr. Ahmed Tibi participated in the protest.

At the central celebrations in Gaza's Yarmuk stadium, Arafat repeated demands made last week that Norway, Egypt, the US, Russia and the UN intervene

to prevent Israeli settlement expansion.

An estimated 30,000 attended, according to eyewitnesses, who said it was the biggest Fatah rally since Arafat returned to Gaza, and surpassed the larger Hamas rallies.

"Unity is the way to Jerusalem, the capital of Palestine," Arafat said, and after rebuking Israel for its settlement policies repeated his now famous quote that those who don't like what he says "can drink Gaza water."

Arafat is expected to meet in Cairo this week with Egyptian

President Hosni Mubarak, to coordinate positions on settlements and redeployment, parallel to the meeting of the Higher Liaison Committee, headed by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PA Planning Minister Nabil Shaath, which begins tomorrow.

Marking Fatah day, Arafat sent a letter to Sweden using a new Palestinian Authority stamp. The stamp, however, has yet to be recognized by the International Postal Union, according to PA Communications Minister Dr. Abdel-Hafez al-Ashab.

MEGIDISH

(Continued from Page 1) ily if they really intended it. As further proof, however, there is actually one clause which does deal with an amnesty – but it is limited to Palestinians who have been residing abroad and whom Israel agrees to allow into the autonomous region.

The attorney-general's office and the prime minister's legal adviser also uphold this interpretation, Peace Watch noted.

The Megidish family, which had pushed the government to ask for the extradition, was understandably upset with the decision.

"The family is angry, disappointed, even furious," said Megidish's sister, Sigal. "To my mind, the [PA's] interpretation is erroneous and insolent. They aren't ready to extradite, but they have demands [to receive prisoners]!"

"The government must act decisively [to force the PA to comply]," she continued. "[The gov-

ernment] should stop the negotiations [with the PA]. We must be firm with [the Palestinians], because...this is a clear violation of the agreement. If we give in on this, we will give in on more important things."

Sigal Megidish said she had not yet decided on her next step, since this would depend on what the government did. If necessary, however, she would be ready to try to talk to Arafat herself, she said.

"Extraditing them is such a basic thing," she said. "It's a question of justice."

Sarah Honig adds: Likud chairman Benjamin Netanyahu labeled the situation "a farce."

"The PLO harbors these killers for so many months and even employs them on its so-called police force. All that happened now was that the PLO formalized yet another in a long list of its blatant violations of the Oslo accords," Netanyahu told the Post.

Telecard collectors to convene

THE founding conference of an association of Telecard collectors will be held soon with the encouragement of Bezek, which produces the telephone cards. Bezek Director-General Yitzhak Kaul said the company plans to issue

limited-edition Telecards for collectors. One of the first Telecards that Bezek issued on an experimental basis has been estimated by foreign collectors to be worth \$3,000.

Judy Siegel



Outgoing Treasury director-general Aharon Fogel (left) yesterday toasts his successor, former budget director David Brodet (right) together with Finance Minister Avraham Shohat. Fogel, who took leave of his job after two years and five months, noted that the continuation of the peace process is essential for economic growth. (Text: Jose Rosenfeld)

'Third Way' gathers steam in Golan campaign

DAVID RUDGE

MORE than two-thirds of the Israeli public opposes withdrawal from the Golan and the numbers are growing, veteran Labor Party member Yehuda Harel declared yesterday.

Harel, who said the figures were based on the results of ongoing opinion polls, revealed that at least 10 Labor MKs and hundreds of members of the party had joined his "Third Way" (Derech Ha'Shitshi) movement.

The movement aims to try to achieve peace with Syria while retaining the Golan under Israeli rule.

More than 30 retired IDF commanders and senior officers are members of the movement's so-called Security Forum for the Golan, and four of them visited the region yesterday.

They told reporters at a news conference at Kibbutz Merom Golan that retaining the Golan was the best and only way of ensuring the country's security.

Maj.-Gen. (Res.) Yitzhak Hafi, who was OC Northern Command during the Yom Kippur War and subsequently headed the Mossad, said he believed Syrian President Hafez Assad was sincere in his attempts to achieve peace with Israel.

"The problem is not Assad,

but if [at a later stage] there might be changes in the Syrian regime that would turn everything upside down," said Hafi.

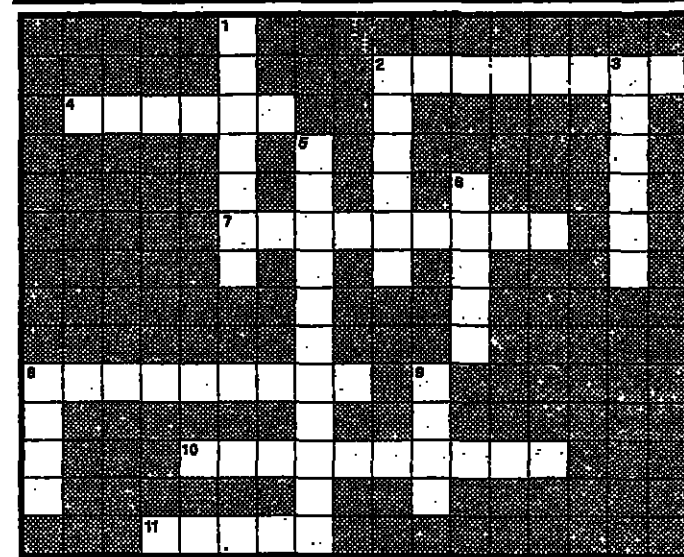
He stressed that it would be impossible to defend the north from the base of the Golan, especially in the event of a surprise attack.

Another reserve major-general, Haim Nadel, described as a

misconception the argument that the strategic importance of territory had lessened in the wake of Iraqi Scud missile attacks on the country.

Citing statistics from the Gulf War, Nadel said allied air forces had flown over 100,000 sorties against targets in Iraq, in addition to long-range missile strikes, but the war itself had only been ultimately decided when the ground forces moved in.

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ברוך דין אמת
זמן ושבע ימים החזיר נשמתו לבורא
With deep sorrow we mourn the passing of our beloved father, brother, grandfather and great-grandfather
YISROEL SHMUEL SCHREIBER ז"ל
who passed away in the fullness of his years on January 1 (29 Tevet 5755)
Mourning by his children:
Marlene and Julius Briskin
Marvin and Rita Schreiber
Molly and Sol Sherman
Riva Freedman
and sister, Rachel Borenstein, Detroit
Grandchildren and great-grandchildren in Israel
Lainie and Barry Klein and family (Efrat)
Jonathan and Aviva Ben-Choren and family (Givat Ze'ev)
Yosh Freedman (Eilat)
and his many grandchildren and great-grandchildren in Canada and the U.S.A.
The funeral was held on Sunday, January 1.
Shiva at the home of Riva Freedman, 7/43 Diskin, 11th floor
Shafrith 7 a.m., Minha 4:30 p.m.

ברוך דין אמת
With great sorrow, we announce the passing of our revered husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather
BERNAT ELOVIC ז"ל
Miami Beach, Fla. - Forest Hills, NY
The funeral will take place today,
Monday, January 2, 1995, at Har Hamenuhot, Jerusalem.
Wife, Helena
Children, Ernest and Sara Elovic
Rose Wolf
Dr. Eugene and Ilana Elovic
Grandchildren and great-grandchildren

150 من الاصل



Yossi Sias (right), Menahem Perry (second from left) and other radio staffers during the first broadcast of 'Voice of the Road,' a new station Israel Radio launched yesterday that aims to reduce traffic accidents. It broadcasts on 531 AM. (Flash 90)

Police arrest 30 for drunk driving on New Year's Eve

IN a nationwide crackdown on drunken driving on New Year's Eve, police arrested 30 drivers found to be under the influence of alcohol.

Seven hundred policemen and Civil Guard volunteers took part in the operation, patrolling areas around clubs and pubs, as well as intercity and urban highways. Some 1,600 drivers received traffic tickets, mostly for speeding.

In Tel Aviv alone, police ticketed 300 offenders, 225 of them for speeding.

A man, whose license had been revoked for previous offenses,

RAINE MARCUS

was convicted of drunk driving and imprisoned for 10 months by Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court Judge Ruth Katzman yesterday.

Yehzekiel Haba, 52, was stopped for a routine check at the end of October by a Civil Guard volunteer in the Gush Dan area.

Police not only found him to be drunk, but also discovered that in 1983 he had been banned from driving for life. In 1993, he was caught behind the wheel again and received a eight-month suspended prison sentence.

Judge Katzman activated his suspended sentence, added two months, fined him NIS 2,000, gave him an additional ten months' suspended sentence, and demanded a NIS 20,000 bond, to be forfeited if he is caught driving within two years of the end of his prison sentence.

Yesterday morning, two people were killed and 15 lightly injured in a collision between a car and a bus near the Triangle village of Kalansua.

A 50-year-old pedestrian was killed when he was hit by a car in the Lachish area last night.

45% of public predict health service will improve

JUDY SIEGEL

FORTY-FIVE percent of Israelis think the national health insurance system, launched yesterday, will improve service, but only 10% think it will be much better.

Almost 20% believe the new system will be worse than the old, and 29% think it will not make any difference.

The survey, conducted by the Geocartography Institute for Israel Radio last week, polled a representative sample of 500 Israelis over 18.

Almost half of those polled said the new system was an important or very important change, while 17% dismissed it, and 15% had either no idea what it meant or no opinion. Young people under 35 and older people over 55 were most apathetic to the new system. Members of Kupat Holim Clalit were more likely to view it as important than members of the three smaller health funds.

Nearly a third of those polled didn't know whether they'd pay more or less for health taxes than they did in the form of health fund membership fees. Of those who had made the calculation on the basis of gross income, 28% said they'd pay less, about 25% said they'd pay the same, 22% said they'd pay about 25% more, and the rest said their health taxes will be one-and-a-half to twice the old figure.

Meanwhile, the NIS 10 charge for visiting a hospital outpatient clinic, which was in effect for all health fund members over the past few weeks, has been canceled. In addition, neither Clalit nor Meuhedet will be allowed to continue charging members for the first visit to each doctor each quarter. Only Macabi will be allowed to continue charging NIS 5 for a doctor's consultation, because it initiated the fee before January 1, 1994.

Mekorot sets out to recycle sewage to irrigate Negev farms

DAVID RUDGE

MEKOROT has started work on a NIS 40 million project to significantly boost supplies of water for irrigating Negev farms, by pumping treated sewage from the Gush Dan region.

The complex program is slated to produce an additional 20 million cubic meters a year of high-quality purified water for agriculture.

The work, being carried out by Mekorot near Yavneh, is expected to be completed within 14 months. It involves laying a new seven-kilometer long pipeline

and installing more pumping equipment.

At the same time, in a separately financed project, the Gush Dan Sewage Authority is expanding the treatment plant, near Rishon LeZion, which serves eight localities in the region, including Tel Aviv.

After being treated, the recycled water is pumped into a natural underground reservoir, to further purify it and ensure it can be

kept under controlled conditions, for use at a later stage.

Mekorot spokeswoman Yael Shoham said the whole process is to be strictly supervised to ensure that none of the recycled water seeps into fresh-water aquifers in the area.

She said the new project by Mekorot, in conjunction with the work being carried out by the Gush Dan Sewage Authority, would minimize the amount of untreated sewage flowing into the sea, while helping to conserve fresh water.

Weizman to visit England for 50th anniversary of VE Day

BATSHEVA TSUR

PRESIDENT Ezer Weizman is expected to visit England at the invitation of Queen Elizabeth to attend a ceremony marking the 50th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany.

Weizman was invited to London following the visit to Israel two months ago of Britain's Prince Philip. No date was set for Weizman's visit, but given that the president served with the Royal Air Force, it is thought likely he will attend the official military ceremony.

Beit Hanassi, however, denied German media reports that Weizman would pay an official visit to Germany. Weizman was invited

there by Roman Herzog during the German president's recent visit here.

Meanwhile, the government has decided to hold a series of commemorative events to mark 50 years since the defeat of the Nazis and the liberation of the death camps.

"We are not celebrating a victory," Yad Vashem director Avner Shalev said yesterday at a Jerusalem news conference. "The Jews lost in World War II. We plan to salute and pay homage to the bravery of the Allies

and to the Jewish fighters who participated in the war effort, as well as to honor the survivors."

Some 1.5 million Jews fought in World War II, including those in the ranks of the Allied forces, and in the various undergrounds, Shalev said. The events will begin with ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz on January 22.

Thousands of survivors and their families are expected to gather first at Yad Vashem, where Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin will dedicate a cattle car

donated by the Polish government on a section of, suspended railway tracks, as a memorial to Jews who were deported.

Then, at a central memorial ceremony at the Jerusalem International Convention Center, survivors will inscribe their names and tattoo numbers in a special book and receive a medal. The following day, the Knesset will meet in special session.

On VE-Day, May 8, Weizman and Rabin will address tens of thousands who are expected to fill Jerusalem's Sultan's Pool for the central state ceremony. The Knesset will again meet in special session the following day.

Ben-Gurion handled nearly 6 million passengers in '94 - though maximum capacity is 4 million

HAIM SHAPIRO

ALMOST six million passengers went through Ben-Gurion Airport last year, in a terminal that ostensibly has a maximum capacity of four million, the Airports Authority said yesterday.

According to the authority, a total of 5,924,047 passengers either arrived at or departed from the airport in 1994. In 1993, the

total was 5,009,730. There were 43,569 takeoffs and landings, almost 20 percent more than in 1993.

The authority spokesman said that the terminal, even with its recent additions, is equipped to handle a maximum of four million passengers a year. It thus cannot promise to provide ser-

vices for such a large number of passengers - a number expected to increase - that is up to international standards.

It is for this reason, the spokesman said, that the authority is promoting the planned Terminal 2000 which is designed to eventually handle traffic of 16 million passengers a year.

Leaders of Australian Jewry convene here today

BATSHEVA TSUR

THE Executive Council of Australian Jewry will convene here today for the first time.

Ist Leibler, president of the executive, said the council decided to hold the gathering in Jerusalem to mark the group's 50th anniversary, and to introduce the community's leadership to senior Israeli leaders. For several members of the group, it is their first visit to Israel, he said.

The 40-member council represents Australia's 100,000 Jews, who differ from other Western communities in certain ways, Leibler said. For example, the Australian community has a higher percentage of Holocaust sur-

vivors than any country other than Israel.

Furthermore the community is very Zionist-oriented. Leibler said there are 10,000 Australian Jews living in Israel, and that most of the recent immigrants are young people.

Between 60 percent and 70 percent of the community's youngsters attend Jewish elementary schools, he said.

Amongst high-schoolers, some 45 percent attend Jewish schools, Leibler said. Inter-marriage stands at 20 percent, which, though higher than a decade ago, is substantially lower than in the US and Europe.

Police refuse to finger one parent in daughter's murder

RAINE MARCUS

POLICE investigating the murder of Natalie Weissman refused to disclose in court yesterday which of her parents they suspect of suffocating the 33-year-old divorced mother while she was sleeping.

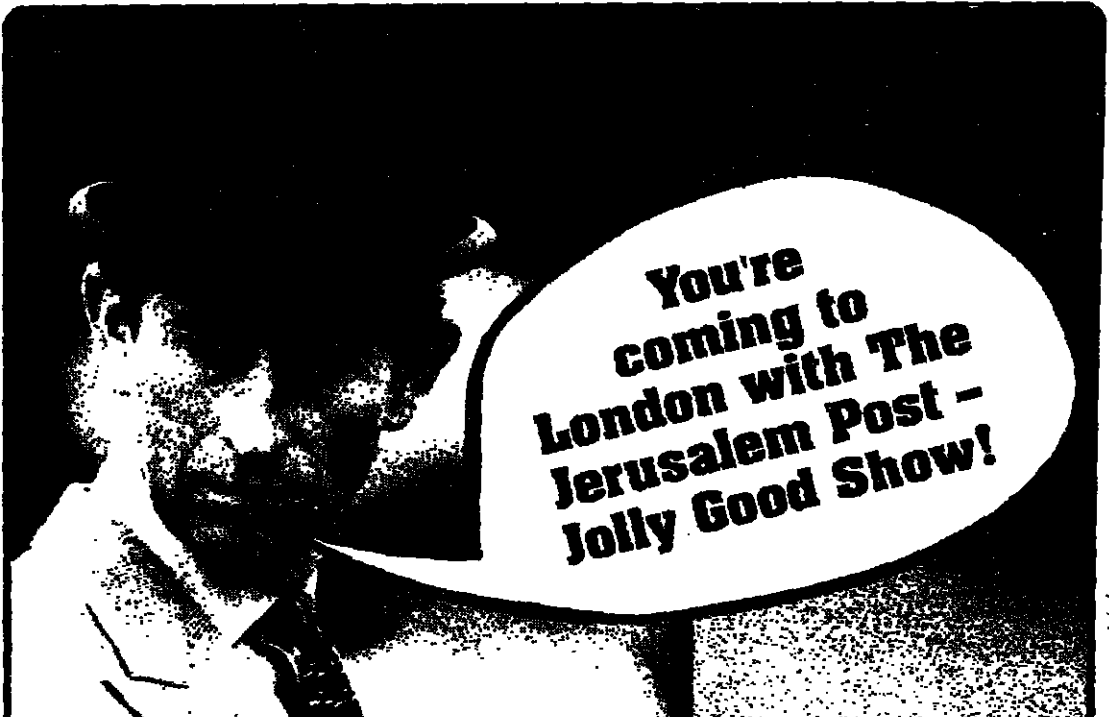
At the remand hearing of Miriam and Michael Weissman in Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yesterday, a police representative said that exposing the murderer's identity would disrupt the investigation.

Miriam, 74, and Michael, 72, were arrested on December 15, the day after their daughter Natalie was found dead. It was first thought she had died from natu-

ral causes, but a pathologist's report revealed she had been murdered.

Defense lawyer Eyal Shomroni-Cohen said police refusal to reveal which of the two allegedly murdered Natalie is harming his clients.

In remanding the couple for an additional eight days, Judge Hayuta Cohan said that since they are suspected of murder she did not think that an injustice was being done to them. Referring to Shomroni-Cohen's complaint to the Justice Ministry that Miriam Weissman was abused during questioning, Cohan said there was no corroborating evidence.



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Five killed in blaze at Antwerp New Year's party

ANTWERP (Reuters) — A New Year's Eve party at a Belgian hotel turned into a nightmare in the early hours yesterday when fire engulfed the building, killing five people and injuring over 100.

Just an hour before 450 revelers were due to toast the start of 1995 at the Switel Hotel near Antwerp's railway station, fire broke out in the hotel's entrance and spread to the ballroom where the party was taking place.

Antwerp authorities said yesterday that, with more than 20 of the injured in critical condition, they feared the death toll would rise.

"I do fear that there will be a number of additional victims," Mayor Leona Detiege told a news conference.

Surgeon Luc Beaucourt said it would be 72 hours before it was clear whether all the victims — mainly suffering from lung damage caused by smoke inhalation — would survive.

Police said earlier that the blaze began when a Christmas tree was set on fire by candles but city officials declined to speculate on the cause, saying it was under investigation by the public prosecutor's office.

According to the Belgian news agency Belga, an explosion was heard in the entrance of the hotel as the blaze began.

"We were sitting at our table having a chat with my daughters and parents when one of my daughters said 'Mummy look, there's a fire,'" said Belgian Arlette Celis. "In a few seconds there was smoke everywhere. People had no time to react."

She raced with her daughters to an emergency exit. She became separated from her parents in the panic and both were now in hospital. She and her two daughters were unharmed.

"My father is suffering after he

inhaled smoke, mother from burns and cuts from glass," Celis said.

A day after the party that went wrong, the acrid smell of burning still hung over the marble and glass entrance hall.

In the smoke-blackened ballroom, whose windows lay shattered on the pavement, some tables were still laid for a dinner that never took place. A Christmas tree hung forlornly by a shattered window.

Yesterday cleaners were wiping smoke stains from the entrance hall as guests prepared to leave.

The accommodation section of the hotel was not affected by the fire.

One German tourist who declined to give her name said the first sign she saw of the fire was when smoke oozed into the nearby dining room where she was eating at about 11 p.m.

"Everyone in the middle of the meal had to run. We were freezing," she said.

The governor of the province of Antwerp, Camille Paulus, said three of the victims had been identified as Belgians Francois Coenen, 63, and Karel Zels, 50, and 66-year-old Swiss Gustaf Fretz. The two unidentified victims were women.

He said 141 people had been injured although some might have been counted twice. Of those 56 were in intensive care and between 20 and 25 in critical condition.

Paulus said that an even more serious disaster had been avoided as more than 300 people had been rushed to safety.

"This could have been a disaster of incredible proportions."

Firefighters brought the blaze under control within 15 minutes, Paulus said, but most of the casualties were caused by smoke inhalation rather than the fire itself.



Russian forces fire missiles at Grozny from their positions in the city of Argun, 10 km. away. (Reuters)

Battle for Grozny continues to rage as Russians capture presidential palace

THOMAS GINSBERG
GROZNY

IN a fiery battle for control of Chechnya's capital, Russians battered rebel positions with artillery, tank and rocket fire inside the city center and claimed to have taken over the president's palace.

There was no immediate word on the whereabouts of Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev, or confirmation that the Russians had stormed his building.

The Russians acknowledged meeting with "ferocious resistance" in parts of the break-away capital, and Chechen fighters denied that Kremlin forces had taken control of key facilities.

Earlier, a group of visiting Russian lawmakers reported seeing burned Russian tanks with the charred remains of soldiers littering the square in front of Dudayev's headquarters.

It was the second day of fierce clashes inside Grozny as the three-week-old offensive appeared to be becoming a final battle for control of the Moslem republic's capital.

Chechen forces had claimed to repulse the New Year's Eve assault when Russian ground forces first surged into the capital; they said they captured as many as 100 Russian soldiers and scores of tanks. Yesterday morning, they reportedly forced more tanks to retreat from the city.

But the Chechens were again badly outnumbered in men and weapons as the Russians made a bid to overcome the rebel fighters' fierce resistance once and for all.

Yesterday evening, the Russian government press service issued a statement saying federal troops controlled Dudayev's headquarters building, other administrative facilities, residential areas, the railway station and a refinery, where it said a fire had been extinguished.

Huge plumes of black smoke that reached several hundred meters into the air covered central Grozny like fog and made it hard to discern which side controlled what.

The main battle for much of the day was centered on the railway station, a few blocks southeast of the presidential building. The Russians had claimed to take it over in Saturday's big push, but it was clear from the heavy tank, artillery and gunfire that no one was in firm control by mid-afternoon yesterday.

Sweden, Finland, Austria enter European Union

STOCKHOLM (AP) — The number of member-states in the European Union increased to 15 yesterday when Sweden, Finland and Austria formally joined.

On New Year's Eve, shoppers in Stockholm could be seen stocking up on rice and other non-European goods they expected to get more expensive.

But others expected little change. All three countries were members of the European Economic Area, which gave them extensive trade agreements with the union and made their economies integrated with the EU countries.

Mass-murder suspect Frederick West found hanged

LONDON (Reuters) — Frederick West, the builder accused of killing 12 women in Britain's notorious "House of Horrors" mass-murder case, was found hanged in his jail cell yesterday, prison officials said.

West and his wife Rosemary were jointly charged with nine counts of murder after the discovery of the remains of young women and girls at their western Eng-

land home in Gloucester. Their alleged victims included their daughter Heather, who was 16 when she disappeared in May 1987.

West was also charged with killing three other women — his first wife Catherine, 26, their daughter Charmaine, 8, and the family nanny Anne McFall, 18. Their remains were found in West's former home and a nearby field.

West, 53, was being held at Winslow Green prison in the central England town of Birmingham.

A Prison Service spokesman said: "The police have been called in and the prison service are inquiring into the circumstances. He was found by staff who attempted to resuscitate him and a doctor certified death."

West had been in custody since

April last year.

Frederick and Rosemary West last appeared in court together on December 13. Their next appearance was due in February.

She has been told of her husband's death. Her lawyer Leo Goatley, who visited her at Puck-lechurch prison near Bristol, said he could not comment on how West's death might affect her case.

Mexican rebels celebrate first year of uprising

AGUASCALIENTES (Reuters) — Peasant rebels celebrated the first anniversary of their New Year's Day uprising in southern Mexico with dance, song and warnings that they will only give up their guns after winning major reforms.

Exactly one year after the Zapatista National Liberation Army emerged from the dense Lacandon Jungle to declare war on the Mexican army, its leaders insisted yesterday that their demands go far beyond reforms in the southern state of Chiapas.

"Our struggle is national," Zapatista chief Subcomandante Marcos said in a recorded message

played shortly after midnight to hundreds of fighters and civilian supporters at a New Year's Eve party here in the heart of rebel-held jungle territory.

"We Zapatistas are prepared to offer up the only thing we have — our lives — to demand democracy, freedom and justice for all Mexicans," Marcos said.

Earlier, armed and masked Zapatista guerrillas sang rebel songs, read poems in memory of comrades killed in the first 10 days of their rebellion and danced with each other and young peasant women from nearby communities.

Despite Karadzic's words and optimistic assessments by government leaders and Akashi, doubts persist as to whether the enemies in Europe's bloodiest conflict since World War II are ready to silence their guns and sit down to negotiate.

All previous cease-fires have been broken in the war that began in April 1992 when Bosnian Serbs rebelled against a Moslem-Croat decision to secede from Yugoslavia and become independent.

Poland's \$40 millionaires vanish at a stroke

WARSAW (Reuters) — As champagne corks heralded the New Year, Poland ceased to be a country of \$40 millionaires.

The central bank slashed four zeroes from the currency at midnight so that yesterday 10,000 old zlotys became one new zloty.

"When we wake up after our New Year's Eve frolics, we are going to find that our bank accounts have shrunk 10,000 times," the newspaper Zycie Warszawy told its readers.

"But we are not going to lose out on this operation."

The so-called "denomination" marks a new start after runaway inflation followed the decline and collapse of the communist system in the 1980s.

One dollar will fetch only about 2.4 new zlotys instead of 24,000, and people who earned a modest monthly wage of five million zlotys (\$200) will now get 500.

The authorities have prepared people for the change with a television campaign featuring a cartoon hamster in broker-style red braces called "Denomi", who reassures people that their new money will be worth exactly the same to them as the old.

"Will it hurt?" the hamster asks. "Yes, but not as much as you think."

The central bank commissioned a 10-minute sequel to a popular Polish gangster comedy film. The aimable villain tries to work out how to forge the new money and finally gives up in despair because the notes are fiendishly difficult to reproduce.

Despite these efforts, surveys show Poles worry that vendors will grab the chance to round up prices, and they fear confusion because the old notes will stay in use for two years alongside the new ones, requiring feats of mental arithmetic.

ISRAEL LANDS ADMINISTRATION

ISRAEL LANDS ADMINISTRATION
Tel Aviv Region

Extension of Bid Period
Invitation to Tender 276/94/Tav Alef

The bid period for the above tender, which is for the lease of Plot No. 12/ Gimmel in Block 7101, for the construction of an office building and below-ground floors for parking and services, and commercial floors, on Rehov Ha'arba' Kirya south, Tel Aviv.

The last date for submitting bids has been changed to February 1, 1995 (12 noon).

Bids should be placed in the tenders box at the Administration's offices at 116 Derech Petah Tikva (Beit Kalka) Tel Aviv, Tel. 03-5638111.

Israel Lands Administration Min. of Construction and Housing
Central Region Jerusalem

Cancellation Notice
Invitation to 300/94/Mem

Lot C-17 - Plot 111, for the construction of 69 housing units has been withdrawn from the above tender, leaving only Plot 104 in Lot C-16, for the construction of 46 housing units.

The updated details for Lot-16:

Plot	Plot Area, sq.m.	Max. Construction Area, sq.m.	No. of Housing Units	No. of Small Apartments	Development Costs, NIS	Deposit, NIS
104	6,755	5,337	49	15	2,079,693	246,000

The tender relates to housing construction only. If approval is granted for the construction of a commercial front, on the ground floor, the successful bidder will be debited with additional land costs (if additional land is needed) in accordance with the Administration's standard procedure.

Bids may be submitted by contractors, entrepreneurs, who are registered in the Contractors Register under Building Branch (100) and who have been approved by the Planning and Engineering Administration of the Min. of Construction and Housing for contracts of scope 3-Gimmel, and whose calculated average number of housing units is at least 50.

Other details of the tender remain as previously published.

Ministry of Immigrant Absorption

On January 1, 1995, the National Health Act came into force. This changes the health insurance arrangements for new immigrants.

One effect of the new law is to provide health insurance coverage for immigrants, as soon as they arrive in Israel. New immigrants receive free health insurance coverage, as they did in the past, for their first six months in Israel. This ceases if an immigrant starts working during this period. Immigrants may choose to join whichever sick fund they wish.

An immigrant who starts to work in this period will pay dues, corresponding to his income. These payments will be transferred to the National Insurance Institute, in the same way as those of all other residents.

On arrival in Israel, immigrants are provided with a medical insurance form, which they should use to register with a sick fund.

All the arrangements for an immigrant's health insurance, previously applying and handed by the Min. of Immigrant Absorption, are canceled.

Immigrants who have in their possession slips for making health insurance payments to the Ministry, for January 1995 or later, are asked NOT TO USE THEM TO MAKE PAYMENTS.

For further information, please apply to your nearest Min. of Immigrant Absorption office.

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Blowing meaningful hot air

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

The tiny, fragile second-grader from Kibbutz Afikim was devastated when a doctor forbade her to play the flute.

But four years later, she got a medical go-ahead to play the instrument of her dreams. After several decades, Er'ella Talmi, 52, is still enjoying a successful performing and recording career.

"I began playing the recorder like all the kids in the kibbutz," Talmi recalls. "In second grade, however, my teacher realized that I had a real talent for playing a wind instrument. She also remembered an elderly kibbutz member who had brought a flute from Vienna which nobody used."

Talmi loved the instrument at first sight. "But I was too little and blowing was very difficult for me. At age 11 my mother took me to see a doctor in Tiberias. He

gave me a full medical checkup and then said I could start playing the flute."

Talmi's career developed slowly but surely. She has played extensively all over the world as soloist, chamber-music performer and recitalist. She is also looking forward to several new recordings with the Naxos label.

Two years ago, she initiated a chamber-music series at Tel Aviv University, calling it "Tones and Colors at the Gallery."

She is married to conductor Yoav Talmi, and they have raised their two children in New York, Kentucky, London and the Netherlands.

A decade ago, the Talmis re-

turned to Israel, and now make their home in Kfar Sava, though they still travel worldwide. Yoav is music director of the San Diego Symphony; the two spend about four months a year in California.

"Everyone wants more in life, but I have no complaints at all," she says. "I play as much as I want and I also have a very happy family life."

The "Tones and Colors at the Gallery" series was a new type of venture for her. "I was approached by the university to inaugurate a series for them and I went out searching for a proper space," she says. "There were

several possibilities, but I opted for the new gallery at Tel Aviv University. It has great acoustics, its locale is very central within the campus, and the director is very cooperative."

The gallery features three spaces with "high ceilings which provide church-like acoustics. But as the acoustic environment is very lively we cannot use a piano there. So we decided on the harpsichord instead," she says.

Talmi is happy to move out of a concert-hall setting, and tries to ensure that each program is somehow connected to the ex-

hibition at the gallery.

The concerts are narrated by Talmi so that "the audience will get some guidelines as to how to listen to the music and observe the exhibition at the same time," she explains.

The "Tones and Colors at the Gallery" series continues tonight at the TAU Art Gallery. The evening starts with a guided tour of the gallery at 7:30 p.m., with the concert starting one hour later.

Tonight's program comprises music by Mozart, Marini, C.P.E. Bach and Marc Kopytman. Aside from Talmi, the performers are harpsichordist Jocheved Schwarz, violinist Eliyahu

Shulman, violist Avi Sarid and cellist Emanuel Gruber.

The exhibition is a retrospective of the work of actress Hanna Maron, which provides Talmi with an added dimension to work with.

"Now it ceases to be just music and visual arts. It is also music with theater. And I was able to find some connections with this exhibition as well," she says.

Talmi performs again on January 23 at the Henry Crown Symphony Hall in Jerusalem, as part of the Voice of Music chamber music series. That performance will also include Schwarz, as well as clarinetist Abigail Arenheim.

Incidentally, Yoav Talmi will be at the same venue January 17 to 19 and January 25, leading the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra in two different programs. At those performances, however, Er'ella Talmi will be in the audience.

Habimah braces for change of the guard

HELEN KAYE

THE Habimah National Theater may be looking for new managers as of today. Nobody is willing to lay bets on the survival of artistic director Gary Bilu or general manager David Alexander, who yesterday completed a tumultuous year in office.

The Habimah board of governors met last Thursday and again yesterday to decide whether to fire either or both of them. Over the past year, the theater has been plagued by internal dissension, fierce criticism over its choice of repertoire, a steep drop in subscriptions, accusations of financial mismanagement, and a steady deterioration in the initial cooperative working relationship between its managers.

Under these conditions, proper management of the theater is impossible. The matter will have to be decided one way or another, "heard chairman Sar Shalom-Shirani said on Friday.

The catalyst was a row that erupted when Alexander postponed the production of Schiller's *The Robbers*, scheduled for February, citing budgetary problems. Bilu resigned in protest but later retracted his resignation.

Both men refused comment, with Bilu saying only that "I'm confident the production will go ahead as planned."

Most people in the know predicted clashes when Bilu and Alexander were named to their posts last year. Alexander is an academic with little real experience in running a theater. Bilu has done nothing else, and up to last year shared power with no one. He founded and ran the Beersheba Theater for 13 years and in 1981 took over Ramat Gan's Beit Zvi Drama School.

But despite their very different styles, no one denied their abilities, and all acknowledged that they faced a huge challenge. Bilu and Alexander inherited a poorly managed theater with an accumulated deficit of NIS 18 million.

Loans have been negotiated with the Communications and Arts Ministry and with banks, which will allow Habimah to start fiscal 1995 with a clean slate. The current operating deficit is less than NIS 250,000. Alexander has streamlined management and defined the relationships between management and staff.

On the downside, Bilu's apparent relegation of Israeli drama to grade B, the noisy resignation of veteran Habimah actor Yossi Pollak, and a plunge in subscriptions from 25,000 in 1993/94 to 18,000 this year are among the many things that have cumulatively damaged Habimah's image.

Meryl flexes her new muscles

FILM REVIEW

ADINA HOFFMAN

THE RIVER WILD

Directed by Curtis Hanson. Screenplay by Denis O'Neill. Hebrew title: *Nahar Peru*. 108 minutes. English dialogue, Hebrew subtitles. Parental guidance strongly advised.

Gail Meryl Streep
Wade Kevin Bacon
Tom David Strathairn
Roarke Joseph Mazzello

AS the Chinese calendar revolves year to year from horse to goat to chicken, so it once seemed that Meryl Streep changed accents annually, from British, to Polish, to white-trash Southern.

After exhausting a wide array of these regional and national locations, each attended by a switch in hair color, the accomplished actress has moved on to body-building as a means of character development, while she has also reverted to her natural blonde.

In *The River Wild*, she goes sculling, fly-fishing and white-water rafting. What choice exertions will her next role bring? An Academy-locked back flip off one of the bridges of Madison County?

Seriously, though, Streep's range is impressive, as is the surprisingly complex set of feelings she manages to smuggle onto the screen in Curtis Hanson's perfectionist action thriller.

She seizes the oars quite believably and lends the stunt-packed proceedings a thoughtful dignity they wouldn't otherwise have.

And though the physicality of the role is unusual for Streep, the over-achieving essence of her character is not. If anything,

there's an inevitability to the sunny perfectionism she exudes as Gail — confident wife, mother, history teacher and daring white-water rafter.

Perhaps this cucumber-cool wonder woman is the only kind of part that Streep — the Vassar and Yale grad, wife, mom, winner of two Academy awards, an Emmy, best actress awards at Cannes and from the New York Film Critics Circle, as well as Tony, Golden Globe, and nine-time Oscar nominee — can still plausibly play.

Last year, for example, in *House of the Spirits*, she acted out the psychic equivalent of Gail's physical prowess in the role of the beloved, telepathic matriarch of a celebrated Chilean family.

But this is the irony of Streep's tremendous range: as it expands, it seems almost too narrow, and will soon leave her nothing to portray but white witches and de-catholized clamps.

In *The River Wild*, Streep's strength becomes literal, concentrated mainly in the biceps and thighs, as Gail sets out on a rafting trip with her eager young son, Roarke (Joseph Mazzello), nervous husband, Tom (David Strathairn), and the family dog.

At first, the vacation's idyllic enough. The water and the soundtrack sparkle; the family meet a cute young oarsman named Wade (Kevin Bacon), rafting with his buddies. Gail laughs a little too loudly at his

dumb jokes, and Wade's slow friend, Terry (John C. Reilly), looks much too tense about her giggling. We know that Tom and Gail's marriage is as rocky as the canyon walls and Roarke resents his father — though something tells us the domestic dynamic will shift shortly.

Aside from raw instinct, that something is the knowledge that director Curtis Hanson (*The Hand That Rocks the Cradle*) specializes in horror stories of an especially bourgeois sort, in which broken-down nuclear units are forced to stop nagging each other once and for all and pull together in the face of "real," outside evil — baby-snatching au pair girls and homicidal maniacs

who care not a bit if they destroy a little boy's birthday outing.

Though it's clear to us from the outset that Wade is armed and psychotic, it takes Gail and Tom longer to guess. Why? Because the plot needs it to, is why, just as the plot needs the little boy to be helpless, the dad to be an uptight wimp, the mom to be a trooper, and the dog to be cute and faithful. (Really. *Everybody* counts in Curtis' generic scheme.)

Clunk! Wade ties the family into the raft and insists Gail guide them through the Gauntlet, a stretch of especially treacherous rapids. Clunk! Clunk! Dad makes his escape and prepares to rescue his family while he reinstates his manhood and rightful place as

Roarke's beloved father.

Clunk clunk clunk!... Let's just say that the movie does what it does — sends a chill down the collective middle-class spine — with skill but few surprises. At its most predictable points, the film works with all the inspiration of an engine on a cold winter morning, successfully turning over.

But then there's Streep — and the rapids. The blasting, churning water and the camera's close proximity to it make the later parts of the movie genuinely scary. As Streep guides the raft between the sharp rocks and through the deadly whirlpools, the coursing river itself proves the only force worthy of the actress's emotional nerve.

No foreign accents or period costumes here, as Meryl Streep moves on to body-building, as a means of character development.

(Melissa Mosley)

'Authentic' master to indulge local hosts

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

FOR his first visit to this country, legendary harpsichordist/organist Gustav Leonhardt is pampering his hosts.

The 67-year-old Dutch musician, with close to 200 recordings to his credit, no longer gives lectures or master classes. But he will make an exception during his tour here, which starts next week.

"For once I indulged, as they requested it specifically," said Leonhardt, in a phone conversation from his Amsterdam home. "I don't think [a master class] helps very much. At best, it can become an interesting hour, but it's too short and too superficial. Such classes must have a practical result in terms of the students," he said.

"Now when it's easy to obtain musical sources, the students can obtain all that information by themselves — much more than 30 years ago, when you could actually tell people new things in these classes."

Leonhardt has been associated for many years now with the so-called authentic music movement. Still, the word "authentic" grates on him.

"It doesn't exist in music as it does in painting or a piece of sculpture where there is a definitive work of art one can relate to," he said.

There are lines he won't cross.

however. He says, for example, that he does not see any sense in playing Bach's keyboard music on the modern piano.

"Those who do that are far behind and they are far from honest," he said. "I wouldn't do it, it doesn't make sense. It is simply not possible to play like this if one penetrates a little into the notations, whose meaning has changed over time."

To those who argue that had Bach lived in our time he would have preferred the modern grand piano, Leonhardt's retort is: "If so, it would not have been Bach [as we know him]."

He is aware that many think the harpsichord is too weak and fragile to be heard and enjoyed in concert halls.

"This is true that in modern halls and in ensembles with modern instruments, the sound gets entirely lost. But in its own right, and when the ear of the listener can adapt to that level and refinement, it is one of the finest instruments around."

Despite his huge catalog of recordings, Leonhardt says that they do not occupy too much of his time.

"It's like an ivory tower, without the reaction to why you make music at that specific moment. But intellectually you know that, in the end, someone might hear it who wouldn't have been able to hear it otherwise," he said.



Gustav Leonhardt will give master classes here, though he doubts their merits.

Leonhardt, who is coming as a guest of the Jerusalem Music Center, opens his tour here on Sunday at the center, where he is to present an illustrated lecture about the harpsichord in 16th-, 17th- and 18th-century music.

Next Monday morning (10:30) he talks about Frescobaldi's harpsichord music, with emphasis on his eighth toccata from the first book. And on January 11 at the same locale, Leonhardt gives a master class for harpsichord players.

His concerts take place January 10 at the Tel Aviv Museum and January 12 at the Henry Crown Symphony Hall in Jerusalem, the latter one part of the Authentic early music series.

The program features music by Bach, Purcell, Buxtehude, Couperin, Forquary, Froberger and others.

Tarantino: From cult film godhead to major player

THAT'S like, really cool. "But, like, how about the one in, you know...? That one was cool, too."

"That one? It was really incredibly cool, too. Oh, it was like, too cool for words!"

Are these mall teens on the subject of the best cuts on R.E.M.'s new CD?

Wrong. Consider instead: A couple of guys talking about movies. Yes, two grown men, by profession a movie critic and a movie director, surfing on a natural high of bubbling movie craziness, discussing great flicks of the past. Yes, I know. I was there.

The other participant, who shares this writer's wretched tendency to use the word cool, is America's current movie wunderkind, Quentin Tarantino, the director of *Reservoir Dogs* and now of *Pulp Fiction*.

Is anyone anywhere hotter? He's in every media outlet in America, loose-jointed and pointy-chinned and terribly dressed in a style that might be called High Movieboy (boots, jeans, jacket).

Ever since *Pulp Fiction* won the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival last spring and became the most praised film of the year, Tarantino has gone from cult film godhead to Major Player.

To interview the incandescent Tarantino is no small thing, particularly by telephone. He talks faster than the X-1 that broke the sound barrier.

When Tarantino is told that a critic had no idea what was coming next in the film, he hoots with glee, a teenager at 31.

"That's really cool!" he exclaims. "I can usually see where it's all going myself, and it's cool to come up with something you can't anticipate."

But the big Tarantino issue is the movie's voice, more than its plot. His film is amazing — a deadpan take on a situation, unromantic and frequently at comic cross-purposes to the dramatic meaning of what's about to take place. For example, as two killers draw in on their marks, they discuss... what McDonald's calls the Big Mac in France (le Royale).

"It actually came from my acting background," says Tarantino.

"I have no fear of performance and I know a well-written line or passage can carry the day. So I'll let a scene run while the actors work through the dialogue. I don't have to cut, cut, cut."

At the same time, he claims to be a sort of unconscious writer who creates without agenda or master plan.

"I just start with an idea and

see where it goes. For example, Jules and Vincent, the two hit men. That's the oldest chestnut in movies, the two anonymous hit men. But they're the kind of characters that start a movie and then they're abandoned. I just decided to hang out with them throughout the whole movie and go to the moon with them!" (The Baltimore Sun)

SEE IT IN HEBREW HEAR IT IN ENGLISH!

THE VISIT OF THE OLD LADY

Jan. 3 at 8:30 p.m.

Modern classic by Durrenmat about the revenge of a millionaire on the lover who jilted her.

Co-production of Habima and The Cameri Theatre with Oded Teomi and Lia Koenig in the leading roles.

"A most successful visit... Irresistible" YEDOT AHARONOT

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON WAY TO THE FORUM

Jan. 10 at 8:30 p.m.

A new production of the hilarious Broadway hit comedy-musical by Stephen Sondheim.

"Strictly for laughs. How could it not be with Avi Kushnir as the wily Pseudolous and Tikki Dayan as matriarch Domina."

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Sinfonietta's Uri Meyer wins post in Japan

URI Meyer, the artistic director of the Israel Sinfonietta Beersheba, has been appointed the chief conductor of the Kansai Philharmonic Orchestra in Osaka, Japan.

The Osaka orchestra, founded in 1970, performs 140 concerts each season, including subscription

performances.

Meyer, who for the last 14 years was the music director of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, joined the Sinfonietta two years ago.

He also conducts orchestras in Europe, the US, Canada, Asia and Africa.

Michael Ajzenstadt

THE JERUSALEM POST

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The budget

THE 1995 state budget, which easily passed the Knesset on Friday, is what one would have expected from a Labor government. It ensures higher taxes for most, a higher deficit, reduction in privatization efforts, declining growth, more inflation, a dangerous worsening of Israel's balance of payment deficit, and above all a larger and more cumbersome government bureaucracy. If there is reason to be surprised and disappointed by the budget, it is that this government came to power with a promise not to act like a Labor government. In 1992 it pledged economic reform, sustained growth, and a big push for privatization, liberalization and anti-inflationary measures.

In retorting to criticisms of its economic policies, the government cites its main achievements: lower unemployment and an annual growth rate of seven percent for 1994. However, the lowering of unemployment was less a result of economic recovery than of diminishing aliyah and a drastic reduction in the number of Arab workers from the administered territories working in Israel. The 1994 growth rate has been impressive (though it may not be as high as the government estimates), but it, too, is not due only to economic expansion. Artificially pumped-up demand and the growth in the money supply, which have accelerated inflation, are also responsible for these growth figures.

A paper by Dr. Yitzhak Klein of Bar Ilan University, published by The Shalem Center, enumerates the budget's serious flaws. In 1995, the budget will take a bigger bite of the Gross Domestic Product than in 1994: 49.6% instead of 47.8%. Concomitantly, taxes will take a bigger bite of the taxpayers' income: 33.8% of GDP instead of 32.3%. More government spending and higher taxes are a sure formula for slow growth and recession.

In 1995, the target for privatization is 14% lower than in 1994. (Not that such targets mean much. In 1994 the government achieved only

11% of its privatization target.) Government spending on infrastructure will also be smaller in 1995 than in the past year.

In 1995, the government budget deficit will rise from 3.25% of GDP to 3.8%. And though there will be a slight decline in the domestic budget deficit, it will be more than offset by the quadrupling of the deficit abroad from 0.25% to 1.05%, contributing to Israel's worsening balance of payment deficit. Only the US guaranteed loans have prevented this balance from becoming disastrous.

But perhaps the most ominous development is the government's failure to hold the line on public sector wages in 1993 and 1994. This has added NIS 3 billion to the 1995 budget. The bailing out of failed enterprises in health care, agriculture and military industries have added another NIS 3.5b. And the budgets of the various ministries will grow by close to NIS 5b. Even the government is predicting a decline in economic growth and a possible recession, perhaps accompanied by worsening inflation.

Klein suggests drastic cuts in the deficit and in the budget in general. He suggests freezing all funding except for science, education and public infrastructure. Cuts should be made in the subsidies for health services and agriculture, and the tax burden should be reduced rather than increased.

Cutting the budget means instituting numerous programs of structural reform in many sectors of the economy: the elimination of cartels, monopolies and barriers to foreign competition. Nor should privately-owned businesses be propped up by government subsidies. Government enterprises should be sold. Anything that can be performed by the private sector should be privatized.

The choice for Israel's economy today, according to Klein, is between an inflationary spiral, leading inevitably to stagflation, or else a policy of macroeconomic constraint leading to recession. It is not a happy choice.

The loyalty question

ISRAEL is a small country with large minorities. The composition of its population is of the kind which inevitably creates problems. To complicate matters, Israel's largest minority - its Moslem Arab population - is part of a people with which Israel has been, and to a large extent still is, in a state of war. As several Israeli Arabs have put it, "my country is at war with my people."

In several regrettable cases, Arab citizens of Israel have betrayed their country, participating in terrorist actions against Israelis. Considering the size of the Arab community and the proximity of its kin across the border, the number of such betrayals has been relatively small.

But the advent of Palestinian self-rule and the prospect of a Palestinian state being established between Israel and the Jordan river have raised national consciousness among Israel's Arabs. It is now fashionable for them to say that they are not Israeli Arabs but Palestinians who happen to be Israeli citizens. Unfortunately, the flaunting of their new identity is inspired not only by what their leaders say but by the government. If an Israeli citizen like Ahmed Tibi is encouraged by Israel to be an official adviser to Yasser Arafat - who still calls for jihad to "liberate"

Jerusalem and adheres to a charter which calls for dismantling the state - it is difficult to expect the average Israeli Arab to feel more loyal to Israel than to the PLO and Hamas.

The Oslo agreement seems to have convinced Arab Knesset members, too, that their first loyalty must be to the Palestinian Authority rather than to the nation in whose parliament they serve. The most outspoken is Abdul Wahab Darawshe, a former member of the Labor Party who now heads an Arab party. On a visit to Syria last year, he was introduced as representing the "occupied territories" of Palestine. That Darawshe now incites the Negev Beduin to break Israeli law by resisting Supreme Court decisions borders on sedition.

If the government chooses to ignore such behavior it will signal to all Arabs in Israel that they can give their allegiance exclusively to their people across the border rather than to their country. And the government may also wish to consider what the future will bring. If the establishment of an "Authority" in Gaza and Jericho can so affect Arab identity, it is not difficult to guess how a Palestinian state across the border will affect the loyalty of Israeli Arabs.

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OPINION



Equality before the law

GIVAT Tamar, the hill near Efrat, could be the cause of an irreparable breach among the Jewish people.

Over the weekend, members of the "peace bloc" and other Jews crossed the line into the enemy camp. Shoulder to shoulder with Arabs, they assaulted police and soldiers, Fatah and Hamas banners flying overhead.

The government is to decide on building in the disputed neighborhood today. Will it also cross the line by ordering a halt to construction work on the hill?

Not only did Prime Minister Rabin originally approve the building of this new neighborhood, but he personally determined the amount the developers' group would pay the Israel Lands Administration for the land. An about-face on the issue now would only further reveal his weakness of character and lack of credibility.

Givat Tamar may well become the burial ground of all the "Greater Jerusalem" plans and promises - Ma'aleh Adumim, Givat Ze'ev and the Etzion Bloc. If a small ruckus by "Minister" Saeb Erekat and Dr. Ahmed Tibi, 10 minutes from Jerusalem, is enough to eliminate a Jewish neighborhood, this is truly the death knell for all Jewish settlement.

Up till now, tens of thousands of people living "five minutes from Kfar Sava and Jerusalem" were under the illusion that living in "consensual security blocs" provided some kind of insurance policy. Will they, from now on, be driven to adopt the extremist stance of "We are all Tel Rameid-Hebron, we are all Netzarim"?

If construction work at Givat Tamar is halted "for security reasons," the public will learn a bitter

ELYAKIM HA'ETZNI

ter lesson: that "security" may be used to serve false pretenses, and that the army is being turned into a political tool. How will tens of thousands of newly drafted soldiers, supporters of the settlements and belonging to more than half of the nation, react to this when called upon to serve?

MOST SERIOUS of all is the legal aspect.

Is Givat Tamar to be the site where 140,000 Jews living in Ju-

The hill near Efrat could turn into a volcano

dea, Samaria and Gaza are divested of their property rights? The hill was bought for millions of shekels and sold to about 500 tenants for NIS 20,000 per lot. Is one "order" enough to cancel such legally acquired property rights?

The IDF's first proclamation after entering Judea, Samaria and Gaza in 1967 was to the effect that all Arab rights and properties acquired under Jordanian law would be safeguarded.

Israel's citizens have their honor, liberty and property rights secured under a law which can be changed only by specific legislation supported by a majority of 61 Knesset members.

It seems that only the Jews of Judea, Samaria and Gaza can be stripped of their civil rights and condemned to live outside any law except that of the terrorist Fatah. In a situation where the settler "child" says to his father "Israel": "If I am no longer your

child, then surely you aren't my father," we wouldn't be far from a state of civil disobedience, the total disregard of any law.

All relations between ruler and ruled depend on a "social contract," whose foundation is equality before the law. Lift the protection of the law, and the contract is broken.

Last week, Meholah settlers in the Jordan Valley, moderates, destroyed an Arab gas station ostentatiously built to put them under siege. Did they "take the law into their own hands"? No - they picked it up from the ground, where it had been thrown by the government.

Givat Tamar could go down in history as a quantum leap into Lebanonization and a precedent for the Arabs, to be copied all over Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

If Arabs can wipe out Jewish property with impunity for the sole reason that it lies 500 meters away, what is to prevent the Efrat people from eyeing Arab property only five meters from their homes?

Efrat expanded northward only out of respect for Arab land adjacent to it eastward and westward. In fact, that is the case all over Judea, Samaria and Gaza, where Jewish settlements border on Arab property which, until now, has been scrupulously respected.

The expropriation of Givat Tamar from the Jews could well explode all relationships with Arab neighbors. These have been surprisingly normal - or at least tolerable - so far. But once even the semblance of legality disappears, the way is opened to a new phase of mutual trespassing and violence.

The writer, a lawyer and former MK, is a resident of Kiryat Arba.

Tempting red herring for sale

THERE's a rumor that Iraq might be Israel's next surprise breakthrough in the peace process.

Well, it isn't true, even though a former prime ministerial adviser and (it's said) a minister or two of Iraqi origin have advocated such a move.

The temptation is certainly there. After the Oslo coup de theatre and some progress on the Palestinian front and pussyfooting on the Syrian front, Israel's policy makers began to concentrate their efforts on the soft spots in the Arab world.

King Hussein, with whom a de facto peace has existed for at least 20 years, was an obvious choice. Morocco and Tunisia in North Africa, and Qatar and Oman in the Persian Gulf, were also relatively easy targets, since there was never really any direct confrontation between them and Israel.

Iraq is a different matter. Iraqi troops were actively involved in at least one Arab-Israeli war (1948/49), and Israel destroyed an Iraqi nuclear weapons-production reactor in June 1981. In January 1991, Iraq fired some 40 Scuds at Israel.

However, there is no common border between the two countries, and thus no territorial dispute. So, at least in cold realpolitik terms, a case could be made for the two countries getting together.

Iraq stands to benefit from the reopening of the old Mosul-Haifa petroleum pipeline which runs

SUSAN HATTIS ROLEF

through Jordan. More important, it believes Israel can play a role in getting the international economic sanctions lifted.

In its efforts to establish an active anti-Iran coalition, Israel stands to benefit from having Iran's greatest enemy on its side. And, of course, it would be

Forget Iraq. Progress toward peace depends on an agreement with Syria

broadening the belt of states within the periphery of the Arab world with which it can establish relations without the need for painful territorial concessions.

BUT THE situation isn't that simple. Dr. Amatzia Baram of Haifa University, who, back in the '80s, favored Israel's opting for Iraq rather than Iran in their eight-year war, argues that Israel doesn't really have an Iraqi option.

Saddam Hussein, he says, has proven himself not only fickle but also totally unreliable and unstable in his positions. Hussein doesn't really need Haifa as an outlet for Iraqi oil, and what he does want - to get the US to agree to lift the embargo - Israel cannot deliver.

In the meantime, rumors about secret contacts between Israel and Iraq have caused damage. This is the third time in the last few years that Israel has been rumored to have contacts with states on the US blacklist.

First there was Libya, then North Korea, and now Iraq. None of these rumors - and some were more than rumors - has won Israel any points in the State Department and the Pentagon. And one of the main reasons for the sudden Mubarak-Assad-Fahd summit held last Wednesday was certainly Assad's concern about a possible Jerusalem-Baghdad agreement.

The result of the tripartite meeting in Alexandria could well be an end to Israel's joyride in North Africa and the Gulf States, at least until Syria gets what it wants from Israel.

Some sort of Syrian-Iraqi rapprochement, even a temporary one, also seems more imminent today than several weeks ago.

From the Israeli point of view, then, talk of an agreement with Iraq is a red herring, at best. It is now clear that further progress toward a comprehensive peace between Israel and the Arab world depends on reaching an agreement with Syria.

If Rabin wants more progress in the peace process before the next elections, he's going to have to do more than make an overnight trip to Muscat.

Support groups

MARTIN HOCHBAUM
MARK J. PELAVIN

AS part of its interest in Black-Jewish relations, the American Jewish Congress initiated an analysis of how the 39 African-American members of Congress voted on issues of special concern to the Jewish community, and how the 32 Jewish members of the House of Representatives voted on key issues of concern to the African-American community.

This examination was undertaken because of a growing public impression that Blacks and Jews no longer share common values and interests.

In analyzing voting in the House of Representatives on 10 key issues of concern to the Jew-

Blacks and Jews in Congress: a house undivided

ish community, including foreign aid, school vouchers and school prayer, we found that Black members of the House supported the Jewish community position significantly more than other members of that body. The average House member voted in support of the Jewish community's position 53 percent of the time, as opposed to 79 percent for the average Congressional Black Caucus member.

There is probably no issue which enjoys a greater consensus within the Jewish community than support for foreign aid. Our study included three foreign aid votes, and clearly demonstrates the overwhelming support of the Black members of the House. On the three votes, 94 percent of Black members supported the Jewish community position, a percentage significantly closer to the 97 percent of Jewish members supporting foreign aid than the 74 percent of non-minority members and the 78 percent of the overall House.

Similarly, on vote after vote, including low-income housing, gun control and loans for students at Black colleges, our analysis found that Jewish members of Congress were far more likely to support the CBC than the other members of the House of Representatives. With respect to the 10 votes in question, 42 percent of the non-Jewish, non-Black and non-Hispanic members of the House of Representatives voted in a manner consistent with the overwhelming majority of the CBC. For the Jewish members of Congress, the figure was 72 percent, a figure substantially higher than that for the non-minorities.

ON ISSUE after issue, the Jewish representatives voted in a manner similar to the members of the CBC. For example, 100 percent of the 67 Jews and Blacks who voted on a bill promoting low-income housing supported that proposed legislation. For the non-minority members of the House, the figure was 69 percent.

While it has long been known that members of the Congressional Black Caucus support foreign aid in general and aid to Israel in particular in overwhelming numbers, what is important about this study is that it demonstrates, conclusively, that that support is seen on the full array of issues of concern to the Jewish community. Among the likely reasons for this phenomenon is the fact that members of minority groups share a common core of values, the experience of feeling apart from the mainstream and a history of cooperation on issues of mutual interest.

It is clear that the new congressional Republican majority will seek to move the country in a more conservative direction and toward a more limited US role in international affairs, restrictive changes in welfare policy, and an expansion of the death penalty.

In the face of this new emphasis, the more than 60-member Black and Jewish delegations will form the core of President Clinton's congressional base. How he makes use of them will have an enormous impact on both the direction in which the US moves and the success of the Clinton presidency.

Martin Hochbaum is the Director of the American Jewish Congress's Commission on National Affairs. Mark J. Pelavin is the Director of AJC's Washington

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"MEAT CRISIS"

Sir, - The best way to end the "meat crisis" currently facing Israel is through a switch to vegetarian diets. This is especially important today since the realities of livestock agriculture are inconsistent with many important Jewish teachings.

1. While Judaism mandates that we be very careful about preserving our health and our lives, flesh-centered diets have been linked to heart disease, several forms of cancer and other illnesses.

2. While Judaism emphasizes compassion for animals, animals are raised today in crowded cells where they are denied fresh air, exercise and any emotional stimulation.

3. While Judaism stresses that we are to share our bread with hungry people, 70 percent of the grain grown in the US and comparable amounts in other developed countries are fed to animals destined for slaughter while an estimated 20 million people die annually due to hunger and its effects.

RICHARD H. SCHWARTZ
Jerusalem (Statens Island, NY)

CALL FOR COALITION

Sir, - Factionalism caused the will of the people to be negated in the last general election. I appeal to militant nationalists to form a coalition to protect the interests of our people. I appeal to Tzviya, Tsomet, Moleket and Rabbi Levinger to form such a coalition.

SIMCHA FRIEDMAN
Jerusalem.

VOTE-STEALING

Sir, - How did it happen to me? I find that my vote, which I consider to be a sacred right, has gone to the Labor party - and I am vehemently and violently opposed to the policies and platform of the Labour-Meretz parties. I voted Tsomet and was pleased to see eight members in the Knesset representing my views. Now, Mr. second-place Tsomet has taken himself and my vote and gone to a coalition which in no way represents my ideals, interests or even my belief in God. I am grief-stricken and wonder if anyone can explain how this can happen to me and others like me. Shame on Mr. Rabin - who is acting like a Texas sheriff - for accepting this person into his coalition and for accepting my vote - which was not intended for him.

A. SHUSTARISH

Ra'anana.

TV BIAS IN NORWAY

Sir, - Israel's should know that opinion in Norway probably has changed from pro-Israel to pro-PLO partly because of Norwegian TV reporters like Odd Karstein Tveit who is biased.

On the very day of the of the Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony, the Norwegian state TV showed for the second time that week how Israeli soldiers break Palestinian arms and beat people with stones. We often watch TV interviews with nice Palestinians and eccentric Jews...

RAGNAR BULL
Holmedal, Norway.

POOR LEGAL PRACTICE

Sir, - "The Palestinian Authority... demanded that Israel implement the entire autonomy accord..." read your front-page lead article on December 4. Of course, we have a contract and they demand that we fully abide by it. It seems obvious that the contract also commits them to fulfill specific obligations. Therefore, our government has the right and duty to demand compliance from the Palestinians as to their obligations that have yet to be fulfilled as a minimum requirement to our fulfilling our side of the contract.

In a sense, the government is acting as the advocate of the people in our negotiations with the Palestinians. The government signs in our name a contract that commits us individually and collectively to fulfill certain contractual obligations.

I believe that we the clients would at least want our legal representative to follow good legal practice and at a minimum demand the other party's compliance with its obligations. Surely this would be the policy that any diligent attorney would pursue in the interest of his clients in the case of a contractual dispute.

We hear again and again how important it is not to endanger Yasser Arafat's leadership lest the peace process be endangered. I think that it is high time that the government consider the consequences of endangering Yitzhak Rabin's leadership as he is subject to the democratic process and must deal with an opposition.

YORAM GETZLER
Aminadav.

150-60-100

Guide misguides parents of tots

PARENTING

ADELE PAFF FRYER

RAISING A HAPPY, UNSPOILED CHILD by Burton L. White. Simon & Schuster. 241 pp. \$21.

WITH this book, author Dr. Burton White expands on his concern for the very young child's social development — a point he initially raised nearly 20 years ago in his popular book, *The First Three Years of Life* (Prentice Hall Press, 1975).

With a long stream of anecdotes interspersed with descriptions of the stages of child development, White attempts to tackle the issue of handling an undisciplined child. In this long-winded tome, the author makes some helpful suggestions, but some are far off the mark in the opinion of many child-care experts.

Wise parents, who see a child's manipulative behavior for what it is, will put a stop to it immediately with strong, no-nonsense restrictions for the child. But most of the book is devoted to episodes of children dictating to unaware parents. The reader is left feeling that anyone — other than the parents of an unruly child — can easily recognize an eight-month-old child's coercive behavior.

This account makes White's work seem simple — to all but those in the child-care profession. He is not describing gross, abnormal behavior, but common, everyday occurrences. Yet he seems to suggest that anyone would be shocked by the stupidity of parents who would allow such obvious, controlling behavior. Anyone, that is, but a preschool teacher who hears these tales every day.

White is on target when he notes that there is a serious problem when the child is in charge. The child-care community knows that there is a startling lack of good parenting skills in our society.

If you need proof, just stand in an aisle at your local store. Most of the

children will be heard before they are seen because they will be screaming or otherwise out of control. White is explicit: Unrestricted children are, among other things, very unhappy and make everyone around them unhappy, too. That is a point most parents miss in the day-to-day struggle of not wanting to stand firm against the inevitable temper tantrum when they say "no."

White's goal is the socially well-developed six-year-old, defined as one who can get attention appropriately, express both negative and positive feelings, take pride in achievement, use adults as resources and happily engage in make-believe. To ensure this, the parent should provide an increasingly stimulating environment, all the while realizing that the child, especially a toddler, will repeatedly test every limit.

In many ways, one gets the feeling that White is not in touch with the current realities of working parents. Most child-care experts advocate, as strongly as White does, that for the first year of life a child should ideally be cared for by just his parents. After the first year, White concedes that a child as young as 14 months shows an interest in and a need for socializing. Yet he is opposed to day care for any child under three.

His only argument against out-of-the-home child care? He has rarely seen situations where the children are being taught to interact correctly and constructively. Indeed, if one is to believe his account, White once observed a large child bully a smaller one in a day-care center. Therefore, day care is bad. It is a shame White did not attempt to educate parents on how to find quality child care, however rare it may be, rather than simply adding to the already overwhelming guilt of working parents.

He also raises questions about his expertise by recommending 101 Dal-



Burton White, in *'Raising a Happy, Unspoiled Child,'* argues against out-of-home care for children under three. However, he is not in touch with the realities of working parents. (Hanan Guttman)

matians as an appropriate movie for a very young child. There is enough violence in some of the scenes to cause many a nightmare.

He explains, in detail, how to reward desirable behavior — but has surprisingly little to say about the powerful use of praise.

The term "spoiled" is used in a Victorian context, specifically that the child will be irrevocably harmed if the discipline process does not begin around eight months of age. In-

deed, he states that parents of three-year-olds have waited "too late" to consult his book. Several controversial child-care issues — spanking, tickling, pacifiers, potty training — are raised and then the reader is told there will be "more about that later." Unfortunately, detailed explanations do not come.

White has attempted to again examine the issue of how Americans parent their young. There is no question that he is correct in warning

parents of the importance of employing the word "no" to teach their children that parents are in charge.

If they do not, they must be prepared to pay the consequences of an ill-mannered, unhappy child. Whether working parents have the time to wade through 241 pages for this instruction is in serious question. A detailed discussion with a good preschool teacher will accomplish the same thing in much less time. (Baltimore Evening Sun)

'Safe' noise levels can damage fetus

EARTHLY CONCERNS

D'VORA BEN SHAUL

PREGNANT women who work in noisy surroundings may be endangering the future hearing of their unborn children. While most countries set a maximum safe noise level of 80 to 90 decibels over an eight-hour workday, this may be far too high for the pregnant woman and her fetus.

Until now it has been maintained the fetus is not damaged by exposure to these "safe" levels. Indeed, tests on newborns whose mothers were exposed to up to 100 decibels during pregnancy showed the baby was not harmed. This, however, seems to be due to the fact that hearing tests were performed during the first weeks of life. According to a recent Canadian study, damage to the auditory system does not show up until several years later.

A study of 131 children (tested between the ages of four and eight) whose mothers had worked, while pregnant with that child, in noise conditions of 65-95 decibels for eight hours a day, was most provocative. These children showed a threefold increase in hearing loss as compared to a similar group of children whose mothers had not been so exposed. An even more significant level of hearing loss was found in cases where the noise exposure had contained a strong component of low-frequency noise.

Experiments have shown that low-frequency noises generated outside the mother's body are magnified as they pass through the amniotic fluid. A low hum to the mother's ears is a cacophony of sound to the embryo. This is especially important since most standards for noise emission don't consider the spectrum of emitted noise.

In a second study, 35 out of 75 children whose mothers had been exposed to 100 decibels for eight hours a day showed significant hearing impairment. Since even minimal hearing loss in the young child is an important factor in some learning disabilities, this is very serious. Children with impaired hearing show a 21.4 percent incidence of learning disability as compared with a normal range of 4.8%.

A lot of research is going to have to be done before anyone can say with certainty just how much noise is safe for the unborn child, and to determine the spectrum of noise levels that may be harmful. But it seems clear that the current "safe" levels of noise exposure are far too high for pregnant women, and a new maximum level will have to be determined to protect the fetus's auditory system.

In the short-term, with more women working in places where noise is an environmental pollutant, "prudent avoidance" seems to be the best choice.

Pregnant women are advised to ensure the noise levels to which they and their fetus are exposed should not exceed 65-75 decibels over an eight-hour day.

Supreme Court: 'Payee only' on a check means just that

LAW REPORT

ASHER FELIX LANDAU

In the Supreme Court, sitting as a Court of Civil Appeals, before the president, Justice Meir Shamgar, the deputy-president, Justice Aharon Barak, and Justices Dov Levin, Elyahu Mazza and Tova Strassberg-Cohen, in the matter of Moshe Tzifat, appellant, versus the First Israel International Bank Ltd., respondent (C.A. 1560/90).

ON July 23, 1987, Moshe Tzifat deposited a NIS 25,000 check at the First International Bank Ltd. It was payable "to the order of" (tifikudat) Ezra Shem-Tov and was postdated to July 29, 1987.

It was a standard check, containing the words "to the order of" in print. Tzifat had, in his own hand, crossed the check and added the words "account [for the] payee only" (lamivan bilvad), meaning the proceeds would be available only to the named payee.

As part of an agreement between them, Shem-Tov deposited a check in the same amount for Tzifat, payable on July 26, 1987.

In July 1987, Shem-Tov informed Tzifat that he would not honor his check, so the latter stopped the check he had made out to Shem-Tov.

However, the bank held Tzifat's check as security for debt Shem-Tov had and claimed the sum of NIS 25,000 from Tzifat in Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court.

The directives to the bank to "pay to the order of" and "account payee only" were clearly contradictory. The directive "pay to the order of" allowed the transfer of full rights in the check to another person designated by the payee, while "account payee only" required the deposit of the

check in the payee's account alone. The court held that the directive which supported the transferability of the check should be upheld, and it therefore allowed the claim.

Tzifat appealed unsuccessfully to the District Court, and he then appealed to the Supreme Court. JUSTICE SHAMGAR, in delivering the first judgment of the court, referred to sections 7, 31 and 81 of the Bills of Exchange Ordinance (New Version) of 1957, section 3 of the Pledges Law of 1967, section 13(a) of the Movable Property Law of 1971, several precedents and legal writings relating to the rights and obligations of the different parties to a check.

Where the drawer inserted the words "account payee only," he directed that the payee alone was entitled to demand payment from him. The check was not negotiable, and no rights in it were transferable to another person.

A crossed check could be paid only through a bank. The bank, however, acquired no rights in the check. It was only an agent. Where the check was "account payee only," the bank's sole duty was to deposit it in the payee's account. The pledge of the check to the bank as security, therefore, was of no avail. It could have refused to accept the check as security for a debt.

The whole purpose of the limitation "account payee only" was to protect the drawer, who could complain against the bank which disregarded his instructions.

Our Bills of Exchange Ordinance, the president continued, was based on the English Bills of Exchange Act of 1882. However, quoting section 15(c) of the Law

and Administration Ordinance of 1948, he said he was referring to English law only for comparison.

Under English law until 1992, the words "account payee only" had no effect on the transferability of a check. Nevertheless, they were regarded as a warning to the bank not to pay a third party without an explanation from the payee. In practice, the bank was excused from paying the check without such an explanation.

Changing the previous law, section 81A of the Checks Act of 1992 clearly stated: "Where a check is crossed and bears across its face the words 'account payee,' either with or without the word 'only,' the check is not transferable, but is only valid as between the parties thereto."

The directives "to the order of" and "account payee only" were contradictory. The question therefore arose as to which directive was to be preferred.

In his opinion, the directive "account payee only" was to be preferred. It was clear and simple. It reflected the true meaning of the language in that it was an instruction to the bank to credit the payee's account alone. The bank was authorized to act only as an agent for collecting the money for the payee.

The above solution also accurately fulfilled the parties' intention. It provided the fullest protection to the drawer, eliminating the need for discussions and explanations. It promoted commercial clarity and stability in collecting the proceeds of bills of exchange.

He disagreed with the lower courts as to the transferability of the check. The true test was the intention of the parties, and where there was a conflict between the printed and the written word, the latter was to prevail.

He cited section 3-118(B) of the US Uniform Commercial Code, stating that "handwritten terms control [take precedence over] typewritten and printed terms," and the American legal authority Cardall's comment: "These rules simply recognize that the manner of transcription that required the most personal involvement most likely indicates the real intent of the parties."

The same rule was imported into section 8(2) of the state's Bills of Exchange Ordinance from Article 6 of the 1932 Geneva Convention on Bills of Exchange: "Where the sum payable is expressed in words and also in figures, and there is a discrepancy between the two, the sum denoted by the words is the sum payable."

He also referred to sections 21(a) and 61(a) of the Contracts (General Part) Law of 1973, which required contracts to be interpreted according to the intention of the parties.

Another advantage of the above construction of the directive "account payee only" was that it ensured legal certainty and stability. This was of the utmost importance in giving legal advice, business planning and laying down the relevant procedures regarding bills of exchange.

Finally, the president dealt with the suggestion of Justice Bar-

ak that the directive "account payee only" did not affect the payee's right to transfer the bill; its only effect was that the holder to whom it was transferred acquired only those rights which were held by the payee himself as against the drawer. After dealing with Justice Barak's reasons in some detail, he rejected the above suggestion because it was not clear what the results would be.

He proposed, therefore, that the appeal be allowed, each party to pay its own costs.

JUSTICE BARAK agreed with Justice Shamgar's conclusion, but dissented from his reasons.

There were three possibilities, he said. The first, supported by Justice Shamgar, demanded the payment of the sum stated to the payee's account only, and denied his right to transfer the check to another person. The second, adopted by the lower courts, recognized the payee's right to transfer the check to another person, according to the latter full rights in the instrument (in technical terms making him a "holder in due course"). A South African court ruled in a similar case that the expression "account payee only" "ceased to have any operation."

There was, he continued, a third possibility described by Justice Shamgar between the first two extremes.

Analyzing in detail many precedents and legal texts, Justice Barak based this intermediate suggestion on five considerations: it

was technically permissible, the expression "account payee only" being comparable with the words "for security only"; it afforded adequate protection to both the drawer and the payee; it maintained commercial stability; it provided the commercial community with an instrument of the utmost importance and, lastly, it upheld the important policy applying to commercial instruments of retaining both their formal and material negotiability to the maximum extent.

In this case, Justice Barak agreed that once the consideration for the check — namely, Shem-Tov's obligation to honor his commitment — had failed completely, there was no basis for the bank's claim.

JUSTICE DOV LEVIN concurred with Justice Shamgar.

JUSTICE MAZZA agreed with Justice Barak as to the legal possibility of the solution he proposed. However, he feared for the many people who would fail to grasp its implications. He preferred Justice Shamgar's conclusion which would "lay down clear and simple lines assisting the ordinary person, saving the need for litigation, reconciling the handwriting with the intention and removing needless obstacles."

JUSTICE STRASSBERG-COHEN paid tribute to Justice Barak's legal ingenuity, but also preferred the simplicity and clarity of Justice Shamgar's ruling, particularly at a time when other methods of payment, such as credit cards, are on the scene.

FOR THE above reasons, the appeal was allowed as laid down by Justice Shamgar. Moshe Tzifat appeared for Tzifat, and Dan Karim appeared for the bank.

The judgments were given on December 28, 1994.

EYE ON THE MEDIA

DAVID BAR-ILLAN

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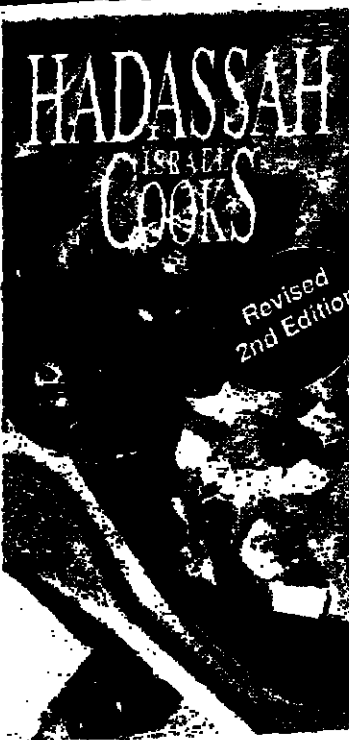
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Mr. Solly Sachs (an Executive member of the S.A.Z.F. (Israel))

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

MONDAY, JANUARY 2, 1995

Clal Israel considers legal action against Channel One

Clal: 'Yoman' gave distorted picture of Amir Ronen case

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

CLAL Israel is examining possible legal action against Channel One for presenting what the company said was a distorted picture of a lawsuit against the company by former Clal International deputy managing director Amir Ronen.

In the NIS 2 million lawsuit submitted last week at the Tel Aviv District Labor Court, Ronen sought compensation for unjust dismissal after he said he exposed corruption in the company.

Clal's board of directors yesterday strongly denied the accusations and instructed management to take legal action against Channel One for its story on Friday night's *Yoman* news program.

"Our legal department is currently examining the steps we can take," Clal managing director David Weinshel said. "The television took a civil lawsuit and made it look as if though criminal charges are involved."

According to the suit, Clal's senior officials covered up corrupt activities in Clal International (previously named Clal Investment House), a brokerage firm active mainly in handling customers' foreign-currency transactions.

Last year, two months after Ronen submitted a report revealing alleged corrupt activity by Clal International managing director Israel Igra, the company decided to restructure its investment division.

The company then transferred management of Clal International to its subsidiary Betucha, and Igra resigned.

Weinshel admitted yesterday that Clal's control committee discovered that Igra had made what he termed mistakes in foreign currency transactions.

In the lawsuit, Ronen said he first discovered corruption in 1986.

He accused former Clal International managing director Aryeh Goldin of fraud and said he was fired after informing former chairman of the board Moshe Steingrad of this.

Ronen said Steingrad covered up for Goldin, enabling him to continue stealing money from the company.

But, in 1991 Goldin's activities were exposed, and he was sentenced in Tel Aviv District Court to six years in prison on several counts of fraud, forgery and theft.

Clal re-hired Ronen in 1991, after a change in the company's senior management. Ronen was appointed assistant to Yedidya Greenberg, head of Clal's capital market activities.

In his new position, Ronen said he uncovered that Igra, at the time Clal International's managing director, was involved in irregular activities and negligent management.

Ronen said the company suffered a loss of more than NIS 1 million in September 1992. Following his findings, management



David Weinshel: 'The television took a civil lawsuit and made it look as if though criminal charges are involved.'

appointed him deputy managing director in an attempt to improve the company's performance.

In 1993, Ronen informed Clal Israel's controller that senior managers were stealing money from Clal International and its customers.

Ronen said he was fired for the second time from Clal International after submitting a report

on his findings to Clal's controller Heinz Valentin.

"I decided to hire him [Ronen] because Goldin fired him," Igra said. "I thought he was okay because Goldin didn't want him, but he is really crazy. His accusations are groundless. Everything was made up because he was fired. All of Ronen's threats and accusations were made after I fired him from the company, not before."

Ronen accused Clal International of trying to steal NIS 32,000 from Teva's account with it. According to the lawsuit, Clal International also stole money from other companies which had accounts with the firm.

"As a result of Ronen's findings [that Igra made a mistake], money was returned to Teva," said Weinshel. "Teva was informed of the correction we had to make to their account. Clal's control committee examined Ronen's report but did not reveal criminal activities in the company."

In the lawsuit, Ronen said Clal management covered up for Igra until 1994, when he resigned from the company. Igra currently manages an investment consultancy firm and is a non-executive director of United Mizrahi Bank.

MK Silvan Shalom, chairman of the Knesset capital market sub-committee, plans to discuss the Clal episode at a committee meeting today. Shalom hopes to formulate an overall reform in the supervision of managements of public companies.

Shohat: More layoffs needed at TAAS

JOSE ROSENFELD

management and the workers a week to see whether they could agree to the conditions set by a government steering committee, which includes transferring plants to the South and worker dismissals.

The Treasury budgeted NIS 840 million in the 1994 supplemental budget for the recovery programs at Rafael, TAAS and Israel Aircraft Industries, as well as additional funds in this year's budget.

According to the steering committee's recommendations,

TAAS' labor force will have to be cut by an additional 1,900 workers. It also recommends reducing severance payments, which amount to NIS 390,000 per worker.

"If we don't succeed in reducing severance payments and the sides do not act more responsibly, then a tough decision, apparently, will have to be made, which could otherwise have been avoided," said Shohat.

No matter which decision is made, including the liquidation of the company, it will cost the taxpayer hundreds of millions, Shohat said.

LIMPING from a recovery program which has deeply cut into its workforce, TAAS-Israel Industries faces additional manpower reductions to avoid sinking deeper in red ink. Finance Minister Avraham Shohat warned yesterday.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Shohat met yesterday with TAAS Chairman Dan Shomron and reviewed all the options for continuing the operation of the company, including proceeding with a recovery program and the possibility of appointing a liquidator.

The ministers agreed to give

Polished diamond exports up 15% in '94

POLISHED diamond exports jumped 23 percent in December to \$231 million, compared with the same period in 1993, the Industry and Trade Ministry reported yesterday.

December's figures brought last year's total to \$3.919 billion, a 15% increase over 1993.

About 43% of the diamonds were exported to the US, 17% to Japan, 17% to Hong Kong, 10% to Belgium, 3% to Switzerland and 10% to other countries.

Ministry Diamond Supervisor Tzafir Avner noted that diamond exports last year reached an all-time record.

The industry's workforce dropped from 9,600 in 1993 to 8,200 last year.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Morgan Stanley to invest \$5 million more in Chip Express: Morgan Stanley Venture Partners, a unit of the major Wall Street investment bank, will invest an additional \$5 million in Chip Express, a subsidiary of Elron. Morgan Stanley has already completed an initial \$3m. investment.

El Al buys cargo planes from GE Capital: El Al has signed an agreement with GE Capital to acquire two Boeing 747-200F cargo planes. The value of the deal for the two planes, including spare parts and reserve engines, is \$100 million.

Shlomo Handel named head of Leumi international division: Bank Leumi's board of directors yesterday appointed Shlomo Handel, currently chief auditor of the bank, head of its international division. Handel will take over from Israel Portat, who is retiring after 41 years with the company.

The board appointed Uri Galili as general manager of Bank Leumi UK. He will take over from David Granot, who is leaving the Leumi Group to become Union Bank general manager.

Geva to be allocated shares valued at NIS 1.3 million: Maritime Bank general manager Amir Geva will be allocated shares valued at NIS 1.3 million, the bank's board of directors decided. Geva will have a 1.16 percent share in Maritime, after the share allocation. The board of directors also decided to allocate shares to 12 senior managers, at a total value of NIS 2.7m.

Elbit acquires Fibronics International: As part of its foray into multi-media, Elbit announced yesterday the completion of its acquisition of Fibronics International, which will now become a full subsidiary of Elbit. Each Fibronics share will be converted to 1/20 Elbit share, for which Elbit has issued 406,127 ordinary shares traded both on the TASE and NASDAQ.

Court rules Leumi doesn't owe Carmel Carpets NIS 800,000: The Tel Aviv District Court yesterday declined to order Bank Leumi to pay NIS 800,000 to Carmel Carpets. The request had been filed by Yisrael Gafni, the official receiver for the conglomerate. He contended that, in error, a foreign customer had paid money owed the firm to the bank. The court agreed that the transfer had been due to a technical error, but ruled that since Carmel had named the company which handled such transactions, the bank did not have to refund the money.

Ministry issues decree maintaining price controls: The Industry and Trade Ministry issued a decree yesterday in consultation with the attorney-general to maintain price controls, following the Knesset's failure to pass the Economics Arrangement Law in 1994.

Peled takes over as IEC managing director: Former police inspector-general Rafi Peled began his tenure yesterday as managing director of Israel Electric Corp. Peled took over from Moshe Katz, managing director for the past four years, who is retiring after 40 years with the company.

Tsur wants quotas canceled

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE government is scheduled to discuss today Agriculture Minister Ya'acov Tsur's proposal to cancel quotas on onions and carrots.

Tsur said canceling quotas will allow farmers to grow an unrestricted quantity of vegetables and onions, leaving only potato fields subject to quotas.

He said the decision is a result of the autonomy agreement, which does not place limitations on the quantity of onions and carrots allowed into the country.

It is necessary to cancel quotas to allow farmers to compete with the new market conditions, Tsur said.

He proposed giving onion and carrot growers a one-time compensation of NIS 30 million.

It would be divided among farmers according to the size of the quota to which they are currently restricted, he said.

Foreign currency reserves up

JOSE ROSENFELD

FOREIGN currency reserves rose by \$128 million last month to \$6.817 billion, the Bank of Israel reported yesterday.

The rise reflected the large foreign currency sale orders in the market in reaction to higher interest rates.

The increase in reserves was moderated by government foreign currency debt repayments and spending.

Total foreign currency trading was \$3.61b. last month. Two-sided transactions with commercial banks made up 74.2 percent of

those transactions.

The basket of currencies inched down 0.1% against the shekel in December and gained 5.71% against the local currency in 1994.

The dollar lost a more substantial 1.07% against the shekel last month, gaining 1.07% last year. At the end of the year, the currency basket exchange rate stood 1.75% below the "crawling peg's" midpoint.

The country's foreign currency reserves peaked at \$7.268b. at the end of October 1993.

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ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS

Patah (foreign currency deposit rates) (30.12.94)

Currency (deposit term)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	5.750	6.250	6.675
U.S. dollar (\$50,000)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$10,000)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$2,500)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$1,000)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$500)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$250)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$100)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$50)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$25)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$10)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$5)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$2)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$1)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$0.50)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$0.25)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$0.10)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$0.05)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$0.02)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$0.01)	4.875	5.500	6.125
U.S. dollar (\$0.005)	4.875	5.500	6.125
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Ministry plan calls for construction of 135,000 housing units on agricultural land

Key Representative Rates

US dollar	NIS 3.0180	Change
Sterling	NIS 4.7141	Change
Mark	NIS 1.9490	Change

Gold, silver close slightly firmer

COMMODITIES REPORT

COMEX gold and silver ended the year slightly firmer after quiet pre-holiday sessions. A tumble in the dollar during the week sparked a slight rally in both precious metals.

February gold closed up \$0.30 at \$384.40, an ounce and March silver was up 1.5 cents at \$4.917 an ounce.

Analysts are predicting the market will begin the new year with no remarkable changes, and prospects of a US interest rate hike early in the year are likely to weigh heavily on these metals.

Comex March copper futures closed up 0.55 cents at 138.60 cents. This upbeat ending will bode well for copper next year.

Despite some sporadic bearish factors, such as November's decline in new home sales and a rise in LME stocks, fundamentals remain constructive and the market has been acting accordingly, analysts said.

CBOT corn closed the year on a slightly lower note, with March futures down 1/2 cent at \$2.31. Dealers pointed out that although weekly export sales were very encouraging, most of the business was with China - which was already old news.

Talk that Chinese buying was coming to a close, as well as weakness in the other grain and soy markets, caused CBOT wheat to a lower close. March wheat closed 1-1/2 cents down at \$4.01-1/2.

CBOT soybean futures finished weaker due to fund selling and partly because of a major decline in soybean prices. Almost ideal weather conditions in South America also contributed to depressed values. January soybeans closed 6-1/2 cents down at \$5.50-3/4 per bushel.

NYCE March cotton futures ended up 0.49 cents, closing at 90.35 cents a pound after reaching a new high of 91.60 in an abbreviated trading session on Friday. Gains were trimmed due to profit-taking and grower hedging.

News that China will be facing a greater than predicted supply shortfall of sugar in 1995 drove world sugar prices sharply higher, with March futures up 0.28 cents to close at 15.17 cents a pound.

March coffee futures lost 5.00 cents on Friday, closing at 168.85 cents a pound. Despite next week's start of export tenders in Central America, investors decided to exit the market ahead of the new year after a weak session in New York on Thursday and in London on Thursday night.

Technically driven trading drove cocoa prices lower, as chartists managed to close a gap in the March chart. The market is also entering the peak West African harvest season but delays in grading and uncertainties of the quality of the product has kept sellers cautious, traders said.

March cocoa futures settled down \$2.00 to close at \$1,280 a tonne.

All markets will be closed today in observance of New Year.

Courtesy of Michael Zwebner, Comstock Trading Ltd.

Disappointment with peace gains hits Amman stocks

AMMAN (Reuters) - Jordan's stock market index showed its first year-to-year fall in 1994, with investors discouraged by the few tangible gains to emerge from peace with Israel.

"Many companies had pinned hopes on the opening of the Palestinian market in the West Bank, and this did not materialize," Jordan's Arab-Banking Corporation general manager Jawad Hadid said.

The Amman Financial Market's (AMF) official index ended the year at 143.60 points, a fall of 9.4 percent from 158.5 points at the end of 1993. It rose a record 22% in 1993.

It was the first year-to-year fall since the start of the AMF index of the 60 most actively traded stock in 1991. The value of shares traded fell 48.91% to 494.9 million dinars (\$707 million) in 1994 from 968.6 million dinars (\$138 billion) in 1993.

THE Housing Ministry is formulating a plan which will give preference to the release of agricultural land for construction of 135,000 housing units, it was reported yesterday.

The ministry has plans to release land for construction to build 90,000 housing units in the center of the country.

The majority of the plots are situated in Ra'anana, Kfar Sava, Yavne, Ashdod, Lod and Ramle.

The ministry has located land for construction of 31,000 housing units in the North, mainly in Haifa, Acre, Yokne'am, Tirat Carmel, Ma'alot, Hadera, Kiryat Bialik and Nahariya.

In the Jerusalem district, the ministry has located land for construction of 14,000 housing units.

Housing prices will continue to surge unless the government adopts a sensible housing policy, Uri Dori, chairman of Uri Dori construction company, said at the Israel Management Center's annual real estate conference last week.

"The public is under the belief

that housing prices will fall," Dori said. "Indeed, in the short run, they may stop going up and may even fall slightly, but this will be temporary. Within half a year, prices will surge, unless the government takes rational measures in an attempt to reduce prices."

According to Dori, housing prices will go up because of the increase in the price of raw materials worldwide and the increase in labor costs.

Dori said cement, aluminum and metal prices have gone up sharply during the last few months.

At the conference, Shikun Ovdim chairman Uzi Vardi predicted housing prices will remain high in the near future because contractors have paid high prices for land.

Vardi called on the government to reduce the cost of construction inputs.

The contractor called on the government to directly give young couples subsidies instead of reducing land prices.

According to Vardi, reducing

REAL ESTATE ROUNDUP

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

The price of land usually increases entrepreneurs' profits, instead of prices, to potential apartment buyers.

About 14,000 dunams of industrial land will be demanded over the next two years, including 5,000 dunams in the center of the country, according to the Manufacturers Association.

Speaking at a real estate conference last week, Yossi Antori, head of the association's Haifa division, said the central region will suffer from a very large shortage of industrial land in the next few years.

"A dunam of industrial land in the center of the country reaches up to \$750,000 per dunam," Antori said. "Many industrial factories are not able to pay these absurd prices. A dunam of land in Holon currently costs \$500,000, compared to \$250,000 two years ago."

The Dovrat Shrem group has raised \$41 million for investment in construction and industry.

The company said about half the money raised was from foreign investors. The company raised \$17 million for Dovrat Shrem Industries and another \$24m. for Dovrat Shrem Klenor, which is engaged in real estate.

United Mizrahi Bank yesterday opened its new branch near the Allenby bridge. The branch will be mainly engaged in foreign currency transactions.

Last week, the bank inaugurated its new branch in Hod Hasharon.

Management said the branch is equipped with the most sophisticated computer equipment and capable of supplying customers with all banking services.

Shikun Ovdim sold 87 housing units in December, compared with 64 in the previous month. The company sold 955 units for the year.

Ashdod reported the sale of 55 housing units in December, compared with 53 in November. The company sold 11 units in Jerusalem, 34 in the center of the country and 10 in the north.

A house on a moshav can be purchased for between \$400,000 and \$600,000, according to Maldan, the association of real estate agents.

Maldan claims the purchase of a home on a moshav has increased in popularity.

A Dori has been awarded a \$10 million contract to construct Elisha Towers in Haifa, a senior citizens home.

Miraz, Elisha Tower's parent company, plans to invest \$20m. in the tower. The building will include 100 housing units, including 12 penthouse apartments and 16 two-and-a-half room apartments.

Kirat construction company has sold 119 of the 120 cottages available in its Ganai Ilan housing development near Bar-Ilan University.

The company said it is offering the last cottage at \$400,000. The six-room, 160 sq.m. cottage is situated on a 200 sq.m. plot.

The company recently started construction of two 13-storey buildings containing 100 apartments.

Kirat has already sold 70 apartments. The price of a three-room, 108 sq.m. apartment is about \$260,000, while a five-room, 145 sq.m. apartment is available at \$280,000.

C. Holdings Development expects to receive more than \$17 million from the sale of apartments available in the Savonai Gan housing development in Ramat Gan.

Africa Israel is constructing the development on land purchased from C. Holdings in exchange for 42%-43% of total profits from apartment sales.

US advances one place to seventh-richest nation

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The United States has advanced one place to become the world's seventh-richest nation, but American shoppers get more for their money than residents in every country but Luxembourg, the World Bank said over the weekend.

The multilateral lending agency said the nation's Gross National Product per capita rose to \$24,750 in 1993 from \$23,830 in 1992. GNP is the total value of all goods and services produced by US workers and capital worldwide.

In seventh place, the US is behind Sweden and ahead of Iceland - or about where it has been most years since at least 1980. Germany was seventh in 1992.

The data, contained in the 27th edition of the World Bank Atlas, showed that Switzerland remained the world's wealthiest nation, with a GNP per capita of \$36,410, down \$320 from 1992.

Others in the top 10 were: Luxembourg,

\$35,850; Japan, \$31,450; Denmark, \$26,510; Norway, \$26,340; Sweden, \$24,830; Iceland, \$23,620; Germany, \$23,560; and Kuwait, \$23,350.

By contrast, Mozambique remained the poorest country in the world, with a GNP per capita of \$80. It was joined by several African and Asian nations.

These "nominal" figures are based on a three-year average of available exchange rates.

While the US ranked at the lower end of the top 10 list, Americans can take consolation from one fact: They get more bang for their buck because prices are cheaper here compared with overseas.

For the first time, the latest edition of the Atlas shows a buying power within each country, after adjusting for differing price levels among nations.

The costlier goods and services are in a economy, the less money can buy and the

lower the "real" income per capita. Conversely, the lower the prices, the further a person's money will go and the higher their income versus other nations.

Luxembourg had the highest real GNP per capita of \$29,510, followed by the US at \$24,750. The US consistently has ranked among the top two on this basis.

Others rounding out the "real" top 10 were: Switzerland, \$23,620; the United Arab Emirates, \$23,390; Qatar, \$22,910; Hong Kong, \$21,670; Japan, \$21,090; Germany, \$20,980; Singapore, \$20,470, and Canada, \$20,410.

Among the notable changes in the traditional top 10 list - which does not take account of price levels - is the absence of a number of Middle East oil-producing nations, including the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.

"The price of oil has really tumbled compared to recent years," said Ward. The oil nations had been at the top of the list in the early 1980s, thanks to high oil prices.

China demands US withdraw tariff threat

BEIJING (Reuters) - China announced sharp retaliatory measures over the weekend after the United States put \$2.8 billion worth of Chinese goods on a tentative list for punitive tariffs.

A spokesman for China's Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC) demanded Washington immediately withdraw threats of sanctions against Beijing over pirating of US copyright goods, the Xinhua news agency said.

The US placed \$2.8b. worth of Chinese toys, electronics, footwear and other products on the list for punitive tariffs in the dispute over pirating.

"The US should immediately correct its action of imposing trade sanctions on China," the spokesman said.

China's threatened retaliation included suspending talks on joint ventures with major US automobile manufacturers.

US Trade Representative Mickey Kantor said he would make a final decision by February 4 on whether China had corrected the problem but, if not, tariffs would be set at 100% for goods drawn from the preliminary list.

"China will have no other choice than to take the counter-retaliatory measures against the trade retaliatory measures of the United States," MOFTEC said.

Any action deemed to be discriminatory against China would have to be treated accordingly, the ministry said.

China said it would impose tariffs on imports of cassette tapes, compact discs, game players and cards, cigarettes, alcoholic drinks and cosmetics.

It also included films and television programs. Trade ties with the International Intellectual Property Alliance and Business Software Alliance would be suspended.

It would suspend applications by US companies and their subsidiaries to set up holding companies in China.

Applications by US chemical and pharmaceutical makers for protection would be suspended along with applications by US audiovisual makers for branches in China.

Talks between the US and China on intellectual property right violations broke down in mid-December, with US officials saying China had not made serious offers. Beijing has said it has made great progress.

US industry says it loses \$827 million a year in sales because of unauthorized copying in China of films, books, records and other copyright works.

The tentative list issued by Kantor's office will be open for 30 days for public comment. Hearings were set for January 24 and 25 to discuss which goods should be hit by punitive tariffs.

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Paltry turnover overshadows rise in all indexes

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

ANDRE LUMBROSO



YESTERDAY was a day that traders and brokers hope to forget.

The fact that the Two-Sided and the Maof went up 0.4 percent and the Karam by 1% was overshadowed by the extremely low turnover, NIS 51.8 million, the lowest volume since June 1992.

The most traded security was Tadiran, with a turnover of NIS 1.98m., followed by Teva with a turnover of NIS 1.87m.

Twenty-nine securities were not traded at all on the Two-Sided market and 18 securities registered only one or two trades.

In other words, close to half the securities listed on the Two-Sided market were not traded at all or barely.

The list of securities not traded included some of the blue chips - Yngon, Elron, Tempo, Mivtah Shamir, Property & Building, and Polgal.

Among those lightly traded were First International Bank 1, Kitan, Mehadrin, and Poalim Investment.

There was general agreement that the imposition of the stock market tax was the main factor behind the drop in activity.

Investors need time to get used to the tax and to see how it will influence trading. In the mean-

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Multi-sided trading

Two-sided trading

				AFTERNOON				MORNING			
				Name	Price	% Change	Volume	Name	Price	% Change	Volume
				banking	319	-0.7	438	banking	338	-0.2	3723
				Abn-Amro	1150	0.7	1300	Abn-Amro	1147	0.5	3882
				Adelphi	94.3	-0.7	28000	Adelphi	94.5	0.0	84254
				Adelphi	94.3	-0.7	28000	Adelphi	94.5	0.0	84254
				Afrim	346.74	-0.2	15	Afrim	346.75	0.0	36
				Alfa	32181.6	1.7	85	Alfa	31828	0.7	25
				Adelphi	94.3	-0.7	17	Adelphi	94.5	0.0	1863
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Hapoel Jerusalem to face Holon in State Cup semis

Mac TA, Bnei Herzliya also advance

JOEL GORDIN

HAPOEL Tel Aviv had its four league points returned by the Israel Basketball Association last week, but nobody was around last night to hand them a place in the State Cup semifinals.

Even though the Ussishkin team beat Hapoel Jerusalem 98-85 in the second leg of the quarter-finals, it was not enough to wipe out the 22-point loss (96-74) in last week's first leg.

Hapoel Jerusalem will play Hapoel Holon, victors over Hapoel Givatayim last night; and Maccabi Tel Aviv will take on Bnei Herzliya in the semifinals to be held as a doubleheader at Yad Eliyahu on February 26.

Hapoel Tel Aviv led the capital squad 38-34 at halftime in a hard, physical game and then spurred ahead by 14 points in the second half. Jerusalem fought back to narrow the gap; and at one point, looked like winning for the second time in four days. However, Tel Aviv's Buck Johnson woke up from a deep slumber and scored seven points in succession to put his team ahead again by 15 points, but not enough for an aggregate win.

An overexcited Tel Aviv coach Zvi Sherf didn't help his team's fortunes when he was hit with a technical foul which cost four points. Other Tel Aviv players took their coach's example and made silly fouls on a relentless Radenko Dovroski who sank 12 out of 13 from the line.

The cool-as-a-cucumber Dovroski scored an overall 27 and the stick-thin Serbian is one of the main reasons why Hapoel Tel Aviv will not be in this year's semifinals.

Hap Holon 108, Hap Givatayim 82 (first leg 87-91)

Givatayim came to Holon full of hope, after their surprising fourth-point, 91-87 win in the first leg. The visitors started well and then wilted under the fiery Holon onslaught led by Doron Shefa.

Holon was on top 50-40 at halftime and then swept to a 26-point win. The key to their success was superb defense, good teamwork and Shefa's scoring ability which was kept in the cupboard for most of the season.

For Holon Shefa scored 27, Shelton Jones 25 and Oren Aharoni 15. For Givatayim, who must now go back to the humdrum task of trying to stay another season in the National League, Keith Bennett and Gary Plummer each had 20.

Bnei Herzliya 83, Mac Jerusalem 79 (108-78)

Jerusalem, which was trying to recover from a 108-78 shellacking last week, had to make up 30 points from the first leg, an almost impossible task even with the home-court advantage.

The Maccabeans could have at least won the evenly-matched, rather sloppy game, but they threw it away in the last seconds when Jerry Simon missed a free throw and Shawn Green had the ball stripped from him.

Scorers for Herzliya were: John Hudson 23, Amir Kaiz 15, Paul Thompson 14. For Jerusalem, Joe Dawson fouled out with 23; Eli Balut, who also fouled out, scored 12. Mac Tel Aviv 87, Mac Ramat Gan 78 (116-76)

After their 40-point thrashing in the first leg, Ramat Gan did well to hold the champions to 33-32 just before halftime.

Tel Aviv then tightened its defense and sharpened its team game to cruise to an easy victory. It could have been a much higher point differential, but coach Muli Kuzin gave his benchwarmers an outing.

For the winners, Radisav Curcic scored 21, and Doron Jamchee 17 (including three 3-pointers) and Norris Coleman 12. For Ramat Gan, John Eubanks thumped in 25 and Lamont Strothers 14. Gur Shelef scored 8, but Nir Riklis disappointed with 4.

Cash leads Australia to win in Hopman Cup

PERTH (AP) - Former Wimbledon champion Pat Cash won his singles and then teamed with Kristine Radford to take out the mixed doubles as Australia rallied to defeat South Africa 2-1 yesterday in a first-round match at the Hopman Cup tennis tournament.

Cash downed Christo van Rensburg 7-5, 6-2 in the men's singles and he and Radford then beat Van Rensburg and Amanda Coetzee 7-6(7-2), 7-6(11-9) in a tense decisive mixed doubles.

Coetzee earlier had beaten Radford 6-1, 6-1 in the opening women's singles.

Cash, 29, is making a comeback after a succession of knee and back injuries. He underwent back surgery 11 months ago.

"I've been working really hard and it's been a long hard slog," he said. "I felt like I was ready to play this summer and this was a good start."

Unseeded Australia will now face the defending champion Czech Republic team of Petr Korda and Jana Novotna in the quarter-finals tomorrow.

The four top-seeded teams: the Czech Republic, Germany, Spain and the US, all received first round byes.

SCOREBOARD

LOCAL BILLIARDS - Hal Grohman beat Gary Milgrom, 5-3, to win the 3rd annual 9-ball championships in Tel Aviv over the weekend.

BRITISH SOCCER - Division One: John

Robinson scored the tying goal in the 52nd minute as Charlton ended Millwall's six games winning streak with a 1-1 draw yesterday.

NBA - No games scheduled.

The Sports Pages are edited by Joe Hoffman

Testaverde leads Browns past Patriots

Marino outduels Montana as Dolphins beat Chiefs



CLEVELAND (AP) - Vinny Testaverde passed for 268 yards and one touchdown yesterday, leading the Cleveland Browns past the New England Patriots 20-13 in the wild card playoffs.

The Browns, in their first playoff game since 1989, backed Testaverde with a defense that intercepted New England quarterback Drew Bledsoe three times, twice in the fourth quarter.

The victory set up the third meeting of the year between Cleveland and the archrival Pittsburgh Steelers, next Saturday in Pittsburgh.

Pittsburgh won both regular-season games.

Bledsoe had one last chance to tie the game after the Patriots recovered an onside kick at their 36 with 1:28 to play. But after getting one first down, he threw four straight incompletions from his 48, disappointing New England in its first playoff appearance since 1987.

Testaverde completed 20 of 30 passes, including 11 consecutive at one point.

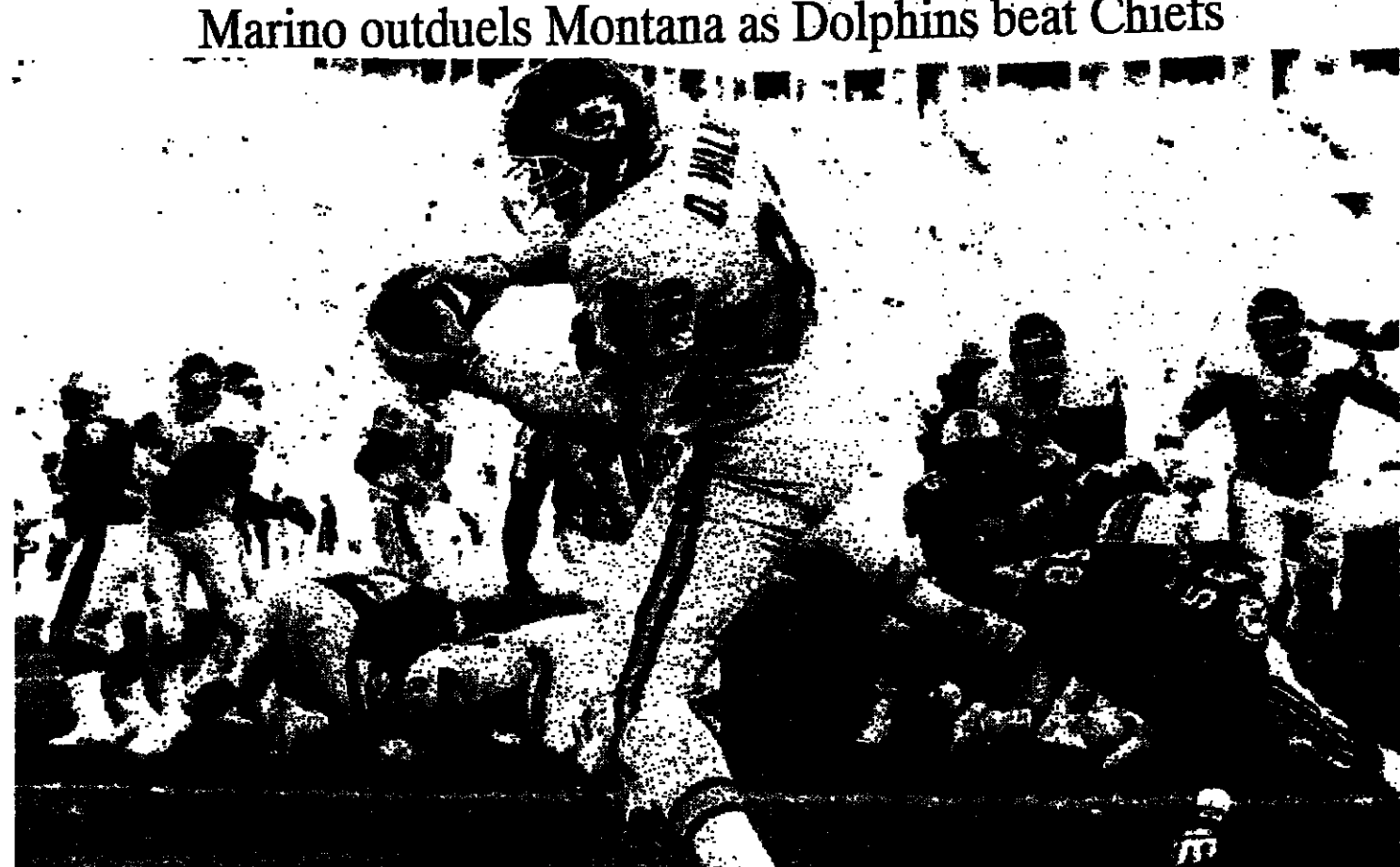
With the game tied 10-10, Testaverde completed all four passes on a 79-yard drive capped by Leroy Hoard's 10-yard scoring run, putting the Browns ahead to stay 17-10 with 2:21 left in the third quarter.

Matt Stover added a 21-yard field goal with 3:36 left, capitalizing on Eric Turner's 28-yard return of Bledsoe's third interception.

Bledsoe, however, brought the Patriots down the field quickly, setting up Matt Bahr's 33-yard field goal with 1:30 to go.

Bahr then kicked the ball out of bounds for a penalty on his first onside kick try, and the Patriots gave the Browns some nervous moments by recovering the next one - until New England's last opportunity died at midfield.

Stover put Cleveland on the board first with a 30-yard field goal in the first quarter. Bledsoe, however, gave New England its only lead with a 13-yard swing pass to Leroy Thompson midway through the second quarter.



STICKY FINGERS - Derrick Walker pulls in a Joe Montana TD pass in 1st-quarter action on Saturday.

(AP)

The first Montana-Marino matchup since the 1985 Super Bowl lived up to its considerable hype.

Marino completed 22 of 29 passes for 257 yards and had four passes dropped. His 1-yard touchdown throw to Ronnie Williams tied the game at 17-17, and his 7-yard scoring pass to Irving Fryar made it 24-17.

The 38-year-old Montana, playing in perhaps his final game, was nearly as good. He hit 26 of 37 passes for 314 yards and two touchdowns, but Miami shut out the Chiefs in the second half.

Stoyanovich's second 40-yard field goal gave Miami a 27-17 lead going into the final period, and two turnovers doomed Kansas City's comeback bid.

First, Montana drove the Chiefs to the Miami 5, but his pass to Eric Martin was intercepted by cornerback JB Brown. The break delighted coach Don Shula, once again coaching from a sideline scouter because of recent leg surgery.

Miami punted and Kansas City

again began to drive. But safety Michael Stewart stripped the ball from Marcus Allen following a 9-yard run, giving the Dolphins possession at their 34 with just 7 1/2 minutes left.

A penalty against Kansas City's Derrick Thomas for illegal hands to the face negated a third-down completion by Marino, allowing Miami to keep the ball until the final two minutes.

San Francisco scored first, on a 20-yard touchdown pass from Montana to Derrick Walker in the first quarter.

Miami took its first lead, 24-17, by scoring on the opening drive of the third quarter. On third-and-goal at the 7, Marino anticipated Kansas City's all-out blitz and lofted a completion to Fryar in the end zone.

After three consecutive punts - the first of the game - Miami drove 59 yards and took a 27-17 lead on Stoyanovich's field goal.

A brilliant effort by Kimble Anders gave Kansas City a 14-7 lead. He caught Montana's short third-pass pass in the flat, spun to avoid one

tackler, bounced off linebacker Bryan Cox at the Dolphins' 40 and then found himself in the clear down the sideline to complete a 57-yard score.

After the teams traded field goals, Miami tied the game 17-all with an 80-yard drive capped by Williams' first NFL score.

Marino set up the score by withstanding a heavy rush on fourth-and-3, pump-faking and then hitting OJ McDuffie for a 17-yard completion to the Chiefs' 19.

WILD CARD PLAYOFFS
SATURDAY'S RESULTS:
Green Bay 16, Detroit 12
Miami 27, Kansas City 17

LAST NIGHT'S RESULTS:
Cleveland 20, New England 13 (Sports Channel repeat broadcast 2 pm today)
Chicago-Minnesota (after press deadline)

DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS
SATURDAY, JANUARY 7
Cleveland at Pittsburgh, 7:30 pm
Chicago at Green Bay at 8F, 11:00 pm

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8
Green Bay at Miami at Dallas, 7:30 pm
Miami at San Diego, 11:00 pm

England's fog thickening despite Atherton's stand

SYDNEY (Reuters) - England's gloom deepened yesterday when fast bowler Craig McDermott sparked a late collapse which handed Australia the upper hand in the third Ashes Test.

The tourists, already two-nil down in the five-Test series, lost four wickets for three runs before the close to finish 198 for seven at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

It was a dramatic reverse after England captain and opener Mike Atherton had restored some credibility for his side with a defiant 88.

Atherton found an equally resolute ally in Lancashire colleague John Crawley. The pair rescued England from a precarious 20 for three by adding 174 runs for the fourth wicket.

But McDermott stopped the recovery in its tracks 30 minutes

before the close by removing Atherton and veteran Mike Gatting during his first over with the second new ball.

From the relative security of 194 for three, Atherton's departure prompted a dramatic - and familiar - England collapse.

McDermott, who was forced to leave the field for treatment of a stomach upset after lunch, began his assault by removing number three batsman Graeme Hick and Graham Thorpe during his opening spell.

England, which must win to prevent Australia from retaining the Ashes, struggled throughout to cope with McDermott's pace and hostility.

The Queensland fast bowler, whose haul yesterday took his total for the series to 20, finished four for 42 from 20 overs.

After battling for more almost five-and-a-half-hours Atherton's resistance was finally broken when McDermott removed his off stump with a ball that cut back off the pitch.

Atherton struck eight boundaries in a typically patient and circumspect innings during which he faced 276 balls.

Crawley, who made 72, followed his captain back to the pavilion 18 minutes later when he edged a catch to Mark Waugh at second slip to become pace bowler Damien Fleming's second victim of the day.

Crawley came into the side for his first appearance of the series in place of opener Alec Stewart, who was ruled out after suffering a broken finger during England's 295-run defeat in the second test in Melbourne on Thursday.

After a cautious opening, the

England's late collapse, which included a duck for Gatting and was capped by the run-out of wicketkeeper Steve Rhodes, was their second of the day.

In the opening hour of play, Fleming removed Gooch for one during the second over when the veteran batsman edged a catch to wicketkeeper Ian Healy.

McDermott comprehensive bowled Hick for two and followed that breakthrough five balls later by trapping Thorpe leg before wicket with his score on 10.

From that low point, Atherton and Crawley defied the Australian bowlers for 4 1/2 hours with a mixture of stubborn defense and occasional aggression to compile England's biggest partnership of the series to date.

After a cautious opening, the

pair gradually grew in confidence before McDermott struck.

For once, Australia spinner Shane Warne failed to make an impact, toiling for 27 overs without reward at a cost of 56 runs.

England first innings

G.Gooch c Healy b Fleming	1
M.Atherton b McDermott	88
G.Hick b McDermott	2
G.Thorpe lbw McDermott	10
J.Crawley c M.Waugh b Fleming	72
M.Gatting c Healy b McDermott	0
A.Stewart not out	0
S.Rhodes run out	1
D.Gooch not out	0
Extras (b-7 lb-7 nb-7)	21
Total (seven wickets)	198
Fall of wickets: 1-20, 2-10, 3-20, 4-194, 5-194, 6-198, 7-197	
To bat: D.McLaren, P.Tufnell	
Bowling: McDermott 20-7-42-4 (nb-2), Fleming 20-10-54-2, Warne 27-6-55-0, May 17-4-35-0 (nb-3), M.Waugh 5-1-9-0 (nb-2), Bevan 4-1-8-0	
Australia: M.Taylor (captain), M.Star, D.Boon, M.Waugh, M.Beaver, S.Waugh, I.Healy, S.Warne, C.McDermott, T.May, D.Fleming	

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Leket calls Burg a 'Trojan horse' in battle to head Agency

SARAH HONIG

ACTING Jewish Agency chairman Yehiel Leket went on the offensive against challenger MK Avraham Burg (Labor) yesterday, labeling him a "Trojan horse" and charging that he is dragging the Labor Party into factional confrontation.

Leket spoke at a news conference officially announcing his candidacy for the Labor nomination to the post of Jewish Agency chairman.

"Burg was and remains a close political ally of Haim Ramon, Yossi Beilin and Hagai Merom. Suddenly, now that he has entered the Jewish Agency race, he sees fit to deny the obvious connection and even attack his political buddies," said Leket.

"Their silence in view of what Burg had to say about them is a little more than suspicious...Burg is to be this grouping's Trojan horse in the Jewish Agency," he said.

Leket is generally perceived as having the backing of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, while Shimon Peres is seen as supporting Burg. Leket maintained yesterday that "neither Rabin nor Peres want this to deteriorate into factional warfare, but Burg is forcing this upon them."

During the news conference, Leket stressed his achievements in promoting Jewish education in the Diaspora and improving the ties between Israel and the Diaspora.

He noted that under his administration the Jewish Agency staff has been trimmed from 4,500 to 1,600 and that new regulations went into effect limiting trips and expenditures abroad.

In response, Burg said he "pitied the person who needs to defame and insult in order to promote his own shaky public standing."

Burg said he despised the at-



ACTING Jewish Agency chairman Yehiel Leket announces his candidacy for the Labor Party's nomination to head the agency. (Israel Sun)

tempts "to drag this competition into the gutter with such defamation and slander, which has brought the Labor Party to its present crisis."

Leket's comments will hurt him like a boomerang, said Burg. "I have no doubt that the members of the [Labor Party] central committee will censure him."

Ramon's bureau staff gets 400% wage rise, despite Histadrut deficit

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

DESPITE the Histadrut's financial plight, the 1995 budget for Chairman Haim Ramon's bureau has doubled, while the wages for bureau workers have quadrupled compared with last year's budget. The quarterly budget was approved yesterday by the Histadrut parliament.

The Histadrut leadership failed to formulate a yearly budget proposal, due to the huge financial deficit and lack of certainty concerning the labor federation's income, treasurer MK Haim Oron said at the parliament session yesterday.

Consequently, Oron presented the parliament with only a quarterly budget, estimated at around NIS 100 million. The quarterly budget is for the most part almost identical to last year's.

However, the expenses of the chairman's bureau are budgeted at NIS 543,000, compared with NIS 250,000 last year. The wage sub-clause listed NIS 430,000 in salaries, 400% more than the

equivalent clause in last year's quarterly budget.

The drastic wage increase derives from the numerous assistants, aides and spokesmen Ramon has taken on under personal contracts, giving them larger salaries than regular Histadrut workers.

Oron said that with the advent of the National Health Insurance Law and the failure to yet establish an organization tax or "membership fee" to ensure its operation, it was impossible to assess the Histadrut's income for 1995.

He also noted that the Histadrut suffers from a deficit of NIS 1.2 million and hundreds of workers on the firing list face uncertain terms of compensation.

Shas's members in the Histadrut coalition threatened yesterday not to support the proposed quarterly budget, but then agreed after receiving a promise that the welfare part (which Shas oversees) would be reviewed.

Histadrut to sell Sifri to Steimatzky

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

THE Histadrut executive decided yesterday to sell Sifri, one of the country's largest book distribution companies, to Steimatzky.

Sifri, which has been suffering from financial problems for several years now, has been valued by the Histadrut at NIS 4 million, while its debts total NIS 18 million. Its inventory is estimated at NIS 2 million. The company does not own any real estate.

Most of the debts are owed to Bank Hapoalim, Bank Otzar Hahayal, and its parent company, the Histadrut-owned Mifalei Tarbut Ve'chinuh.

The urgent need to find a buyer for Sifri stemmed from the parent company's financial straits, which senior Histadrut sources attribute to the Labor Party's failure to pay its debts for services rendered during last May's Histadrut election campaign. The debts include a large sum of money for the production of Labor's campaign-launching ceremony in Jerusalem last April.

In 1993, 120 of Sifri's 170 workers were laid off and the company's largest shop and central warehouse in Tel Aviv were closed down. An estimated NIS 2 million cash injection was required for a two-year recovery program to take the operation out of the red.

Green light given for disputed mosque renovations

BILL HUTMAN

A DISPUTE over mosque renovations in Jerusalem's Old City has been resolved for the time being, after city inspectors ruled work done so far is legal.

Last week, municipal building inspectors, accompanied by police, twice visited the Salahiyyeh and Omar Al-Khatib Mosques, after police received a tip that illegal work was underway there.

The inspection was initiated by Jerusalem police chief Cmdr. Arye Amit who, for undisclosed reasons, was concerned about the mosque renovations.

Sources close to the case said police were concerned the renovated mosques, among the holiest Moslem sites in the Old City, would draw large crowds difficult for police to control.

Police spokesman Shmuel Ben-

Ruby confirmed that Amit asked city manager Ilan Cohen to check on the legality of the work. Ben-Ruby declined to say why the request was made.

City Hall spokesman Hagai Elias, meanwhile, said the city inspectors visited the mosques and found no wrongdoing. He noted that all the work being done was inside the buildings.

The city will continue to inspect the mosques to ensure the work conforms to the building codes, Elias said.

Wafk director Adnan Hussein strongly attacked what he saw as an attempt to halt the work.

"We are not going to allow [Jerusalem Mayor Ehud] Olmert or anyone else stop us," Hussein said. "These mosques are the property of the Wafk, and it is our right to repair them."

Kessar protests to Russian envoy over 'interference' with security

HAIM SHAPIRO

TWO incidents last week, in which Russian guards interfered with the work of El Al security personnel, developed into a diplomatic incident yesterday, with Transportation Minister Yisrael Kessar lodging a protest with Russian Ambassador Alexander Bovin.

The first incident occurred in Moscow on Wednesday, and a similar one in St. Petersburg on Friday.

Kessar told Bovin that interfer-

ence with El Al's security arrangements constituted a violation of the aviation agreement between Israel and Russia.

Bovin replied that he would contact Moscow to look into the matter, and expressed hope that El Al would continue to fly throughout Russia. El Al spokesman Nahman Kleiman said that as of last night, the airline's flight due to take off for Moscow today was scheduled to leave as usual. Kleiman refused to comment on the incidents.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Man murdered in Kiryat Bialik workshop

A 67-year-old man was murdered at his welding workshop in Kiryat Bialik's industrial zone yesterday evening.

Police and Magen David Adom paramedics found Yehayahu Zinner, of Haifa's Nevei Sha'an district, lying in a pool of blood. He had apparently been killed with one of the implements on the premises, where he worked part-time.

Haifa police spokesman Supt. Shoshani Markovitch said it appeared the murder was criminally motivated.

Second teen remanded in murder case

The teenager arrested by police over the weekend on suspicion of obstructing justice in the investigation into the murder of Haifa psychologist Eliezer Levi was remanded yesterday for 10 days by the Acre Magistrate's Court.

The juvenile, a resident of Acre, is believed to have aided the murder suspect, also 17 and from Acre, in setting fire to the victim's car. The burned out vehicle was found over the weekend in the Ahituv Forest in western Galilee.

Two held for threatening to kill Yekutieli

Jerusalem police yesterday detained a haredi father and son for allegedly threatening the life of Meretz city councilman Ornan Yekutieli, who strongly opposes closing roads on Shabbat. The two, 37 and 16, allegedly called Yekutieli's home and threatened him. They were released on bail after questioning.

Bill would mandate quorum for Knesset debate

The government has decided not to take a stand on a bill by Rehavam Ze'evi (Moladi) which would mandate a quorum of 12 for a debate in the Knesset plenum. Ze'evi said the bill is aimed at preventing the passage of important laws with only a handful of MKs present.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal said that while he opposes a quorum in principle, if one is to be set, it should be a serious one, like 61 MKs. A minimum of 12, he said, would merely entrench the current reality in law.

He agreed, however, with Justice Minister David Libe'i that the final decision should be left to the MKs, and not the government.

Winning cards

In yesterday's Mifal Hapayis daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the jack of spades, 10 of hearts, eight of diamonds, and queen of clubs.

Fraud squad checks claims against Segev

RAINE MARCUS

THE National Fraud Squad is examining claims that MK Gonen Segev earned more money than permitted by law while acting as an adviser for the Hamat Gader health spa.

But national investigations chief Cmdr. Yossi Levy stressed that police would only examine the allegations, and that there was no investigation as yet into Segev's alleged activities.

Levy received information last Sunday from Attorney-General Michael Ben-Yair, and announced yesterday that the material had been handed over to the fraud squad to determine if there are grounds to launch a criminal investigation.

By law, MKs are allowed to earn NIS 60,000 annually in addition to their government salary, but Likud MK Limor Livnat claims that Segev earned NIS 360,000 as a consultant for the spa.

Segev was appointed energy minister last week, though the appointment has yet to be approved by the Knesset. Livnat asked Ben-Yair to stall the appointment and launch a criminal inquiry into Segev's earnings as a consultant for Hamat Gader, but Ben-Yair has stated he will not block the appointment.

In her letter to Ben-Yair, Livnat said that Segev did not receive the money in return for work carried out and therefore she suspected he received bribes.

Livnat said she also received an anonymous letter saying that Segev had promoted the spa to sufferers of rheumatic diseases and received money for his services.

Matza, Badash want two Arab MKs tried for incitement

EVELYN GORDON

THE two MKs of the Democratic Arab Party should be stripped of their parliamentary immunity and tried for incitement, MKs Yehoshua Matza (Likud) and Pini Badash (Tzomet) demanded yesterday.

Matza laid two crimes at their door. First, he said, both Abdul Wahab Darawshe and Taleb A-Sanaa had been present at, and encouraged, a riot by El Khader residents four days ago over the construction at Givat Tamar.

"They incited against the government... and caused an uproar [that included] stone-throwing," he charged.

Darawshe, however, denied the accusation. "I haven't even been [to El Khader] yet, though I plan to go," he said.

A-Sanaa could not be reached for comment.

Matza also said the two had called on the Azazmi Beduin tribe in the Negev to disobey a High Court of Justice ruling requiring it to leave land it claims, but which the court had found to be state land.

"[The first] is clearly incitement against the government, and the second is incitement against the High Court of Justice," he said.

Darawshe, however, insisted that the High Court verdict "did not contain a clear decision," and had certainly not denied the tribe's request for alternative lands - it simply said any such solution must be determined at the political level. This is a process in which Matza, as chairman of the Knesset Interior Committee, should be actively involved, he said.

To call for the Arab MKs to stand trial instead, he added, "only increases hostility, and doesn't contribute to the coexistence of Jews and Arabs."

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Research Grant application forms are available from the office of the Israel Association for Canadian Studies c/o Daniel Ben-Natan, Hebrew University, Mount Scopus, Jerusalem; Tel: (02) 883367, Fax: (02) 826267. The completed forms in 6 copies must be submitted by February 28, 1995. Applications can be submitted in Hebrew, English, or French. Applicants will be informed by April 30, 1995, of the results of their application.

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